In Pas Requisat

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at http://archiveofourown.org/works/16428104.

Rating:	Explicit
Archive Warning:	Graphic Depictions Of Violence
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	Hannibal (TV)
Relationship:	Will Graham/Hannibal Lecter
Characters:	Will Graham, Hannibal Lecter, Alana Bloom, Freddie Lounds, Jack Crawford, Original Characters, Beverly Katz, Will Graham's Dogs
Additional Tags:	Hurt, Angst, Sometimes comfort, Hannibal is Hannibal, Serial Killers, Past Alana Bloom/Will Graham, Blood and Gore, But the gore is not that gore because I don't know how to write that, mentions of sequestration and kidnapping, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder - PTSD, slow burn i think, Murder Husbands, Anal Sex, Oral Sex, cheating-depending on your definition of fidelity, a bit abstract writing sometimes, Hannibal falls in love hard, Will doesn't work for the FBI he's a sociology professor, Not Beta Read, I might have a detached way of writing? Not sure, Probably not for everybody, I like food be warned
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2018-10-27 Completed: 2019-02-16 Words: 35,732 Chapters: 24/24

In Pas Requisat

by Oscarthegrouch

Summary

Will is a boat mechanic and Alana's ex high school sweetheart. While he's currently living through a psychologically rough patch, he meets a stranger weirdly intent on getting to know him.

Notes

This fic is super important to me, it represents a lot of work and was initially the first work I was supposed to introduce to this fandom. I'm so proud to be part of the Hannifam, I hope it will please you. Have a good read!
Warning: my writing is a bit hard to digest, I'm still learning, sorry!

Panick Attack and Adagio

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will let the radio run free. The melody of Adagio oddly befitting. The chords of the viola accompanied the heaving of his heart. He had turned it on because the voice of the presentator had been a pleasant deep hum. Comforting in the silence.

He breathed through his nose, drawing in the air, inviting it to fill his lungs before holding it in for a second. A silent request for it to love the tissue of his lungs. Then he released it like a mercy. But he called it back in as soon as it left. A pleading dance between him and the oxygen.

He concentrated on the feeling of his body against the door frame. Felt the soreness in his underside from sitting improperly, acknowledged the tightness of his shoes that constricted his toes. He reclaimed his body slowly. Let it speak louder than the mind. Trying to win his sick feeling over by possessing himself again.

It was only after twenty minutes of this that Will opened his eyes. Adagio had ended since long. Another piece was playing in the background. He sighed relieved. Stronger and clearer than he had been in a while.

He watched the sky in front of him. Concentrated on all the shades of color it had to offer. Pale, light, dark and intense blue mingled with drops and splashes of pink that were only interrupted by suggestions of whites.

Stroking his forehead, Will reflected on what could have been.

I could have been erased from the world, he thought. *I could have disappeared and it would have continued rotating on its axis, fearless and determined but without me.*

That was when he decided to get up and make some food. He was alive and he owed it to fortune to appreciate it by treating his body correctly.

Chapter End Notes

This chapter is more of an introduction, so short that here's the next chapter →

Supermarket

List in hand and mouth determined, Will stepped out of his car towards the alignment of carts. The coin went in easily for once, soothing his already threatening nerves.

He passed the automatic doors, very much focused on the task at hand. His surroundings were familiar, capitalistic and organized in a mess of products; dishwasher, candles, cereal, condoms, pearls, toys made in china and boxed foods with the exception of fruit and vegetables let free to breath under the artificial air. Will considered them for a bit. Knowing he ought to go to a market to get better produce. He imagined the taste of fresh tomatoes bursting under his teeth and the tartness of a golden pear relieving its intimate flavor to his mouth. It would be a waste to buy them here.

He left the aisle to direct himself towards meager needs like coffee, toilet paper, black soap, backing soda and a few glasses to replace the ones he had knocked off his bed side table.

Will spot the man in the animal section.

He did not belong here, that much was clear. Neither did the tailored suit or his careful haircut. He looked as if he was searching for someone or something, and Will let it rest. Not reading into it, too focused on the goal of getting out of here as soon as possible.

Efficiency was the word.

He pushed his cart, through the small crowd of people, past the man, grateful for his anonymity and grabbed the dog food. He took treats along the way, feeling grateful for the reprieve the animals offered.

His list was finally complete, when a hand landed on his shoulder, reminding him far too much of another. He jumped visibly, his body hadn't expected any form of social exchange except for the inevitable one with the cashier.

For a moment he thought it was 'him'.

His heart dropped as if trying to squeeze itself fearfully between other organs. But his reason quickly flicked him and so did the voice that came out from the stranger.

"Your face is familiar, have I met you before?"

The tone was crisp, polite, coated with a dab of curiosity, something else Will couldn't decipher and an accent, probably east European. He detached the hand from his shoulder with an intent shrug.

"I'm sure we haven't" he said, voice tense. He had a very good idea of where and how the stranger might have seen him.

The man took back his hand with a twitch of lips and a tightening of his nice fingers.

Regaining his composed smile he pressed on "I would hate to sound insistent but I am quite sure of my impression."

The smaller man's grip tightened on his cart. He didn't spare him a glance and continued walking forward, eyes focused on the faraway registries.

Undeterred, the other continued in his suave voice. "I draw, not enough to call myself an artist but enough to flatter myself on my visual memory" he informed. "I do feel like I have seen you face before...although I remember you smiling" he finished, eyes focused on Will's closed off face.

The only way he could describe the man who was confronting him was rude. Not in the common sense of the term. Not because he was unaware of other people's existence in his surroundings but on the contrary, because he was and chose to trespass them.

"I clearly don't remember you" he said, turning towards the man. "**I** can 'flatter' myself from having an eidetic memory, so if you'll excuse me, I need to move on with my day".

The man's smile wasn't too different from a snake's expression. The stretch looking like a smile but possibly only that: a stretch of lips.

"Interesting choice of words. You don't **want** to move on with your day. What chases you?"

Will stopped mid-stride. Unnerved at the scrutiny, and even more so at the correctness of the implication. The man was watching his face with high interest, maroon eyes patient. Will granted him eye contact at last, trying to tear through the man's expression to find his intent. He didn't find it but knew, the man knew something about him. The inequality of the exchange pulled at his unease and tickled his anger further.

"You are being incredibly rude" he said, smiling that twitchy smile whenever he said something unpleasant to others or to himself. The emotion in his voice betrayed the inkling of fear that hid beneath his introversion and fatigue.

The man's near absent eyebrows raised slightly to the word and he took a step back. He put a hand to his chest bowing lightly. Face stern, smile forgotten. "My apologies for being insistent. I was so sure of recognizing your face".

Will was embarrassed by the sudden display, far too theatrical for his liking. He blinked rapidly before nodding awkwardly as a means of acknowledgment. The stranger walked away and Will felt himself stir only when he saw him disappear.

He moved quickly then, an anxiety forcing him to move faster and faster, as if someone was chasing him. He recognized his own irrationality, resented it but let it rule him, too tired to fight.

It must have shown on his face because the cashier beeping his articles sent him repeated glances from the corner of her eyes. The smile he tried to offer probably throwing her even more off than giving the intended effect he had hoped for. He moved fast as he pulled

everything back in the bags that he had stuffed in the cart and payed cash. He strode away, eyes darting from left to right, searching for a silhouette he was hoping he wouldn't find.

The stranger was nowhere to be found for now. He sighed relieved when he reached his car. The bags were put in hastily and it was with comfort that he grabbed the familiar wheel of his car. He could go fast, away and hidden. He was free. He reversed with ease and got out of the parking lot.

However he couldn't help but check from time to time in the mirror to see if anyone was tailing him. He knew it was a paranoid behavior, knew that he was working himself up for probably nothing but this afternoon's shopping, alongside with its encounter had triggered back something ugly in him. A primal fear that whispered 'run fast and don't come back' to his legs. He gripped the wheel tighter, turning on the radio station. Going back to the classical music channel, knowing it would be the only one were mentions of violence wouldn't be thrown at him at random. Right now he knew very well how ugly the world could be and didn't need a friendly reminder.

The supermarket experience had been far too taxing for what it had been. Stranger or no stranger. Actually he had been a distraction of some sorts. Will clutched his stomach, willing the nausea away. He hadn't even been able to pass the toiletry section. He had bought soap at the pharmacy instead, giving up to his weaknesses.

He felt like crying and running at the same time, his body providing him with a flight reaction in front of a danger that only came from his past and that it was too late to run away from. He let an angry tear fall, hating himself for how fragile he was acting. Proving all of those who called him a victim right.

"Survivor my ass" he gritted between his clenched teeth. *I didn't deserve this, I didn't respect myself* he thought, repeating the reproaches several times in his head.

The telephone rang, intruding on his private moment. He covered his eyes in an anxious gesture.

"For fuck's sake I want to be alone" he yelled at it. One of the dogs whined and Will hated himself more.

The ringing continued but he refused to pick it up. He needed to be alone. He was incapable of staying polite right now. The beeping of the machine announced the upcoming message. Will groaned at the sound, falling to the ground and tucking his legs against his chest.

"Leave me alone Alana" he prayed squeezing his eyes. Her attitude was suffocating him. Not only did she call and text him daily but she had stopped by his house two days ago when he was not answering. It had taken all of his will power to show up at the door instead of pretending to be asleep.

"The Chesapeake Ripper killed his officially third victim today Mr. Graham, for the family's sake and for the safety of others, would you grant an interview?" came in the electronized voice of Freddie Lounds. Will screamed at the top of his lungs "Fuck!" he said, banging his

head back against the fridge's door. "Fuck, fuck, fuck", he grabbed the first thing that came close to his hand, the coffee pot, and threw it across the room.

He sobbed as he heard her give her phone number and email address for the third time, clutching his ears and wishing for all of it to go away.

When they had found him, they had said it was alright, that it was finished. But they had lied. It was still there. Everything was still in his head and there had been consequences. They followed him everywhere. He didn't belong to himself anymore.

This afternoon, he was supposed to meet up with Agent Jack Crawford again.The man who was leading the investigation. He didn't know how he was supposed to help him if each time he uttered something the big man assured him his imagination was on overdrive.

Market

Chapter Notes

Thanks for the kudos you left!

The morning filtered through his open curtains. He woke up appeased for once, body clear from sweat and eyes rested sufficiently to promise the absence of headaches. He checked to his right. Most of his dogs were still asleep.

Buster was awake but remained on his pillow, Winston was curled next to Zoe, which was lounging on Harley. Jack was missing though. Will suspected he was at the door, needing release. He got up silently, trying not to wake them up for once, and checked around for him. He was sitting patiently in front of the door, ears raising at his approach and tail wagging.

Will smiled as he let him out, appreciating the timid sun rising and the blue, blue of the sky. It was a good thing he got up early because he would be able to go to the market. It was somewhat posh, he didn't go there often because it was expensive, a thirty minute drive and full of people. But he needed to feel alive again and canned food wasn't great for that. He also wanted to go fishing in the afternoon and wanted to accompany his catch with something worthy; the contrast between fresh fish and processed vegetables would be vulgar.

He started making coffee and went about filling the water bowls. He chose to let the front door open as he saw Heidee coming along followed by Zoe, knowing they would enjoy being able to come and go as they pleased. He promised himself he'd go on a walk with them before fishing, they needed the relief, carrying part of his stress like every child did for their parent.

Will scratched his back gingerly and took a long sip of his beverage. Searching for his wallet and car keys in the same go. He wanted to be there early, to avoid too much agitation.

His shower was quick and efficient. He put on his clothes, simple and a bit 'dorky' like Alana liked to say.

It reminded him he needed to respond to her text. He answered her offer for a night out, feeling good about today and missing her gentle eyes. He hadn't seen her in good terms for a while, and it was something their friendship, as well as himself, needed.

He brushed his teeth neatly, spat carefully in the sink as not to dirty the new mirror he had bought to replace the one he had shattered a few weeks earlier. He remembered how Alana had pushed him to buy a new one, only pointing out how pathetic it was of him to leave the broken one in sight. Like a huge scar he refused to let heal or even hide. Maybe that had been the point back then. Sometimes he still felt like he missed the shattered reflection it offered,

but Alana put up with enough of his shit for him to grant her one or two things from time to time.

He looked at himself in the mirror, noticing that the night of sleep hadn't really changed his worn down appearance. At least he had gained back some weight, he might simply look over worked to the untrained eye.

Will stepped out of the bathroom, turning off the light on his way and sighing at his circular thoughts. *Nothing but time can truly heal us* he tried to tell himself, although he felt that this wound hadn't started scaring. Sometimes it even felt like it was inviting an infection.

Thermos in hand, he took his leave, pondering on what he could bring Alana tonight. A bottle of wine didn't seem appropriate, flowers too cliché. He wanted to show her how much he appreciated her friendship.

The drive was nice, soothing. There weren't many people on the road so Will could let his mind take off in its heights. When he arrived the market was pretty well animated already. He could see tones of brown and black moving around from where he stood.

The clientele was different than the one he was used to, this was a place where one got quality. Well cultured and high placed people buzzed around. Self-sufficient smiles and unaware faces dancing everywhere. Will always felt like they lived on another planet. A dream world. He did admit to himself that he was slightly envious sometimes. Obliviousness seemed nice from his angle.

He didn't know his way, so he wondered around. Will didn't blend in exactly well but he found he still appreciated the crowd. It made him feel shielded.

He stopped at a mushroom stand. It seemed all variations of yellows and blacks were displayed on the rack.

He was leaving with his a bag of girolles and horns of plenty when a familiar silhouette standing a few feet in front of him drew his attention. The man from the supermarket was here, talking amiably with a fine looking man.

From this angle the stranger looked softer, less threatening and probably more normal too.

Will hesitated to turn when the maroon eyes caught him. He seemed shocked but composed himself quickly, a genuine smile appearing on his lips. Will clutched his bag closer to his leg.

The taller man excused himself from his partner and strode towards Will who cursed his luck. He didn't want another awkward exchange.

The stranger walked swiftly towards him, elegant and poised. He greeted him, offering his hand.

Will didn't take it.

He was ashamed at how impolite he was currently being but couldn't shake away his doubtful fears. Instead he took a slight step backwards, eyes fixingthe man's forehead attentive and

careful.

However the smile didn't disappear. Quite casually, he retrieved his hand and placed it in the pocket of his jade pants.

Will noticed the man carried a bag of various items, it was overflowing. When his eyes glided along the arm that held the groceries, he also saw an absence of wedding band.

His trail of thoughts got interrupted when he started talking.

"I am terribly sorry for the way I behaved yesterday" the foreigner started, eyes fixed on Will, "But I was right, I did see your face before".

The stranger looked playful.

Will's fingers dug in his palms. He knew what was coming and didn't like it. He bit his pale lips, chapped by worry. Politeness be damned he would give the man a piece of his mind if he said it out loud.

"You're a friend of Alana Bloom's"

Will's eyes grew wide. Not expecting this the least.

"She's a fellow psychiatrist whom I enjoy exchanging with on various subjects" he supplied. "I saw a picture of you both in her kitchen."

Will smiled in his presence for the first time. It was quick and shy but it was there. The fact that the man was an acquaintance of Alana's reassured him greatly. It made him feel normal. He knew very well which picture he was talking about, as he had its double in his own kitchen.

"I see, Alana and I go way back" he mentioned. Offering his hand.

"I'm Doctor Hannibal Lecter" the other supplied, taking Will's warm hand in his. "One can never be too wary of strangers, don't be embarrassed". Will grunted and turned away, hand dropping.

“I thought you were...snooping around." he justified, although the words weren't covering it. "Will Graham".

"Like I said, no need to apologize Will" Hannibal answered, "and I must admit; if I wasn't then, now I am definitely tempted to snoop. If you are the Will Dr. Bloom mentioned than I believe you are worth knowing."

Will flushed, not taking well to the compliment and wanting this conversation to be over. The man looked well groomed and friendly but Will wasn't looking for friends, he just wanted to fish. He nodded his head jerkily, lips curling inwards.

"Let me accompany you, you seem new to this market, I haven't seen you around." he proposed gallantly, hand lightly touching his elbow. The gesture was but a gust of wind, but

Will's senses were on fire and he suppressed the need to rub it to erase the touch.

"That's kind" he tried " but I'll manage."

This time Doctor Lecter took the bait and tilted his head. His eyes didn't leave Will's face, pondering whether he should add something. Will oriented his body away, encouraging him to move on.

After a short breath intake, Hannibal spoke again, voice smooth and practiced. "I am hosting Alana next week, something simple, a dinner. I was thinking of extending my invitation to you."

Will considered it. He hadn't been properly social in a while and it probably be good training for him before he had to go back to work. He was also intrigued by the man's insistence.

"I'll think about it" was the safe answer he provided.

Will slithered through the market, hoping not to meet the man again. He felt he had been social enough for the whole day. After finding his bell peppers, eggplant and artichoke he vanished towards his car, elevated at the idea of being able to fish again.

Relief was immediate and strong when he stepped out of his car .The white house soothing him on sight with its familiarity. He heard the dogs barking at his return, scaring away his mean thoughts and replacing them with excitement and love. Grabbing enthusiastically the shopping bags he opened the door and let himself be surrounded by his mutts. He knelt, muttering praises at their gentle mugs.

Inside, the first thing he did was to serve himself a finger of whiskey, then he sat in his armchair, breaking pieces of smoked beef for the dogs. They jumped and licked and begged for more, making him laugh. When his fingers found the furs, different in texture but each pleasing in their own way, he laughed lightly, knowing that this right here was peace and the meaning of life.

Date with Alana

Chapter Notes

> This chapter is a bit of a self-indulgence, Hannibal will soon be more present I swear. I'm just trying to draw an overall atmosphere.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Will arrived at Alana's house on time. Applesauce warned her of his arrival well before he could reach the door. She appeared in the entry, petite and fair, looking distinguished and professional like she mostly did. He smiled at her genuinely. She had been his high school sweetheart and his longest relationship. Three years they had lasted as a couple. Although he still saw their break-up as a failure, their friendship wasn't. They had been now friends for more than a decade. The closest thing he had to family. Alana was very well aware of that too. She tried to be his dad and mom at the same time, her nursing complex slipping in from time to time. He fled it when he could, being patronized being too much of an occurrence in his life as of late. People mistook his awkwardness for a door to pity.

Alana was cocking her hip, left eyebrow raised daringly. He came closer, ignoring the sniffing and licking of the dog, favoring his concentration on Alana. He looked at her with a face he hoped showed recovery and health. A glint of relief in her eyes told him she believed it partially. They hugged a moment, both needing it. Her for reassurance and him for comfort.

"It's good to see you Will." she muttered in his curls. Her heart tightened at the sight of the flush scar on his wrist. She squeezed him tighter and Will pushed her away lightly. "I'm fine, stop henning around" he said, letting himself in to hide his embarrassment.

Alana's house was big, almost too big. European styled though one could spot South African inspirations here and there; a pleasing blend that told about her mental curiosity.

He disposed of his coat on his own and went to the kitchen, eager to get rid of his bag. Alana followed him, used to him moving freely in her house. It occurred to her just now that he was very much like Tasha. The cat she had as a teenager.

"What's making you smile like that?" he teased, having noticed the amused look on her face. Alana shook her head, "Oh nothing..do you remember Tasha?"

Will stopped the unwrapping to glare at her "the cat who peed on my bag pack?" She laughed and he tried to look offended but the rivalry had been the least of his concerns back in those days. "You just reminded me of her." she said nodding gently. "Really?" it piqued his interest. He wanted to know how she saw him in that moment. Sometimes Alana seemed to understand him the best, other times not so much. It was a coin flip.

Intrigued he waited for her answer. With a gentle smile she came closer to him, looking at the package he had brought her.

"Is that a present?" she asked.

He nodded, smiling shyly. "An informal one more like it".

Her eyes sparkled at idea of Will bringing her something.

Knowing he wouldn't like the attention or the prying she took a step back.

"So Tasha was quite wary of knew surroundings. When I moved out and whenever I took her on vacation she would spring out of her clatter, and just like you" she paused to see if he was listening, which he was, "she moved as fast as she could all around the place to mark it and make sure the place was empty of threat".

Will hummed, "safe places are important to animals".

"And Wills" she teased.

He looked at her, amused at the comparison. Will wasn't a cat person but he'd always be more of a cat person than a people person. So it counted.

Taking a plate out he put what he had brought her on it, made it look half nice so that it appeared more appetizing. He handed it to her but didn't watch her reaction, preferring to suck on his fingers instead to take away the stickiness off them.

"What on Earth is this Will?" she said, bewildered at the content. "Smell it" he said patiently, slightly giddy at the idea of making her discover something new.

"It's edible right?", Will nodded with a smile and turned around to put the kettle on.

"Oh gee it does smell really good, is that some sort of honey?"

Will turned around, mugs in hand, "right on, it's raw honey comb." She looked very pleased at the idea and he told her it was supposed to be pretty good with tea. "Especially green tea, you have macha or sesame ice cream?"

Alana clapped her hands excited. "Of course I do!"

She had tasted them in Japan, when she had gone to a conference. After that she had taken to the habit of buying some from the small Asian store; even more so when she discovered that Will liked it as much as her. They were going to sleep with happy bellies tonight.

When she came back from the pantry where she kept her second freezer, Will had set the table near the window from which they could see the forest, making them cozy.

When they were both seated and served ice cream, the pale yellow of the honey comb sprinkled on top, she poured the tea. A green one, like Will had advised, it smelled like nostalgia and strength at the same time.

Looking at him with a serious expression, she tip toed around the question she really wanted to ask him. Will looked fine. As in the same as usual. But she knew he couldn't be. Barely a month had passed and those things didn't leave the mind so fast, even when you were used to tease darkness.

Will shifted in his seat, sensing her attention. He knew very well what she was going to ask, all he could do was wait for her to do it, because Alana needed to worry about him, it was her way of showing she cared.

Setting her cup she stared into his eyes, a sign that she didn't want to be lied to but was expecting it, and finally asked: "How are you Will?"

He left out a breathy laugh. It sounded raspy and slightly mocking.

"I'm as okay as I can be."

She frowned and pressed some more.

"Are you sleeping?"

Will sighed but indulged her: "Better in the past few days.."

The answer was honest, but better didn't mean well. He had terrible nightmares, sometimes night terrors even. It made him so exhausted that he had to take naps in the afternoon if he wanted to function normally. He also couldn't stand certain sights, smells or sounds. But he kept that for himself. He didn't want her to see him as even more damaged. It was already bad enough she thought he was, no need for her to upgrade his status to helpless.

"I'm battling through Alana" he tried, obviously aiming to reassure her. "The dogs are helping, fishing his helping..and so is time."

"I'm sorry" she said, wrinkling her nose. "I don't want to make you feel like you're not healing fast enough. I should know it takes time I just.." she squinted her eyes, pained and Will finished for her:

"…wished it never happened. Ditto."

She nodded, comforted by how he was acting; he was still her rational, outsider, scruffy, impolite Will.

"This tea is quite pleasing" Will commented to change the subject.

"Right?" Alana chuckled. "I was surprised myself, a friend of mine, Doctor Lecter recommended it."

At the mention of the name, Will paused. A reaction that didn't go missing to Alana's watchful eyes. "You know him?" she asked surprised.

Will only snorted. "No he knows you and he tried to know me. Followed me around.." he added.

"You make him sound indelicate" she commented taking a sip of her tea. "Hannibal is part of a long extinguished species" she said to his defense.

Will huffed, mischievous "I thought Unicorns were supposed to be pretty".

Alana scolded him with her blue eyes. Shaking her dark curls she poked her small nose at him.

"Hannibal is handsome" she corrected. "And I meant that he's a gentleman" she pressed, throwing him a look that said everything for her mouth.

Will threw his head back accompanying his short laughter.

"Alana I'm hurt, didn't I buy you chocolates and flowers for every valentine's? And I remember one particularly persistent jar..."

Alana puffed, unconvinced.

"I really don't understand what the great fuss about that man is. I don't find him that interesting." he pouted.

"Oh Will, you will I assure you. He's fascinating" she said, not without longing.

He rolled his eyes, slightly jealous at her obvious attraction. The next bite he took was slightly aggressive. She watched him, well aware of the leftovers of his affection.

"I'm having dinner with him next week" she said casually.

It brought the focus of his eyes back on her.

"Oh I know" he gritted.

"He invited you?" she asked, shocked.

Will rolled his eyes a second time.

"I told you he was roudy".

Alana smiled, laying back in her armchair.

"Some consider it an honor to be at his table. He's an excellent chef you know."

"Food is hard to enjoy in bad company" he reminded her, not without a touch of smugness.

She tugged on one of her dark strands before answering him, dually annoyed and amused by his childish attitude.

"Hannibal is a gentleman because he behaves courtly with all women, not just the ones he fancies" she explained. And the 'unlike you' was pretty clear in that sentence. "Also he's charming. And I think you should come. It would prove me right."

Will scoffed, knowing she wanted to hear him say so, she tended to preen when he gave in to her. She had managed to make him curious, and he needed a distraction.

Or maybe he didn't want to leave her alone with him.

It was a deal.

Chapter End Notes

Next chapter dinner at Lecter's, the pace will lightly pick up!

First Dinner at Lecter's with Alana

Chapter Notes

> I'm not entirely satisfied with the first chapters of this fics. Much more pleased at the very last ones. I hope it's still okay. Anyway, I promise it'll get more exciting the more you'll advance.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The facade in front of which Will stood was humbler than he would have expected, though he was no fool. They were situated in Baltimore’s finest part of the city. The rents were up the hill around here.

Alana was the one to ring the bell. She had done so without unhooking her arm from his. They looked like an 18th century love pair.

The door opened widely and the dominus appeared. His costume had the colors of a peacock's and Will found this very fitting. Their host greeted them both. He reserved Alana a broader smile, where Will had received a respectful inclination of the head.

He stepped aside, gesturing for them to come in.

"How pleased I am Alana, that you managed to convince our friend to join us."

"Yes, Doctor, a tedious task if I may." she handed him her coat, head lowered lightly to look at him from under her eyelashes.

If the slight puff of the man's chest seemed insignificant, it looked hyperbolic to Will.

When Hannibal reached for Alana's hand in an attempt for a baise-main, Will pointedly handed his coat to the host.

"I truly appreciate the invitation Doctor." Will said, staring into his eyes.

Hannibal straightened his back and added Will's coat to his forearm.

"Not the last hopefully."

Will barely nodded as a response. Instead he followed Alana to the dinning room. Will wasn't one to care for his physical appearance. Or for the image he reflected on society. Yet he was glad to have made an effort for the evening. The setting was so rich, so aristocratic that he would have felt like a muddied boot on a plate without his dress shirt.

Hannibal had returned. He laid a square hand on Will's shoulder. It sent such a spark to his spine that he visibly jostled.

"Oh my" Alana said, smile tense.

"Apologies Will" the Doctor said, leaning closer to the man's ear. "I have been told I have an unusual stealth."

He did not remove his hand from his guest's shoulder and guided him to his seat.

Will found himself aside Alana, and in front of where Hannibal was meant to be seated: in front of them.

The teacher forcefully gulped the dried trickle of saliva left in his mouth, suddenly desiccate. He eyed the long necked pitcher of water sitting at Hannibal's right a few minutes before gathering enough thought to ask.

"Doctor Lecter, if I may?" he said, head jerking in the water's direction.

Following his movement, Hannibal turned towards the glass and lifted it with graceful ease. He served Alana too, and finished with himself.

"I can't wait to see what you have prepared for us Hannibal" the brunette keened.

Hannibal blinked distractedly. The small bob of Will's thirsty throat proving a beautiful distraction. He only turned his attention back to Alana when Will had muttered his thanks.

"I must admit tonight's dish is quite conventional. But I'll let you decide on whether it is a good or a bad thing. I will bring it forth."

"Are you okay?" Alana whispered to Will's ear.

"The food better be worth it." he gritted.

When the host came back platter in hand, it was under the scrutinizing gaze of Will. The Doctor strode in silent inhibited steps. There was an air of grandeur to his generality, it was all very..theatrical. He smacked his lips but the sound didn't reverberate loud enough for the others to hear.

Hannibal's eyes twinkled as he announced: "Voilà: duck Magret with figs, sitting on rocket and its side of orange flavored rice."

Hannibal received compliments from both parties after they had taken their fist bites, and both men let Alana fill the room with conversation.

She had chosen a neutral topic of conversation. One that didn't request opinion or much wit, hoping to first ease Will into the atmosphere before being able to let loose.

"Yes" she laughed "I even tried to convince Will into trying because I thought he had the right attention for it." her eyes gleamed at the memory and Will couldn't suppress the fond smile

spreading on his face.

He remembered watching Alana in her white leotard on stage. Obviously weak on technique and lost in the choreography. From his seat he could see her eyes subtly trying to copy her neighbor, her slight tardiness had made her all the more attractive to him back then.

"At least I got to wear a silver tutu once! Boys were in golden representing the sun and girls were supposed to be the moon. I think Will would have been great with the solar crown" she teased, pulling on one of Will's curls. The man smiled, pushing her finger away. He was enthralled by her enthusiasm yet shy around the Doctor whom he couldn't fathom yet.

"Golden isn't a color that suits you." Hannibal said, expression neutral.

The words were dropped like a stone in Will's current. The ripples waking predators that were meant to be kept away from the surface.

He looked at Doctor Lecter, dumbfounded. He wondered if the man had actually done that on purpose. Was it possible for him to be so ill intentioned as to pull on the thread of his suture? His eyes were searching the man's face, running over its smooth surface in search of a clue. Hannibal kept smiling gently, as if his comment had been harmless.

He parted his lips to speak again and Will reflexively tightened his hand around his fork.

"It dims the color of your eyes and brings out the yellow of your complexion." he clarified.

"And what would you suggest Doctor, I'm curious" he bit, "perhaps were you thinking of red?". He closed his mouth, jaw tense and gaze unblinking.

The aggressive undertone wasn't lost to Hannibal's ears. He quirked an eyebrow, mirroring surprise. However, before he could reply, he was interrupted.

Alana cleared her throat, sensing the tension and desperate to recede in the pleasant chit chatting they had been doing so far. After all, she was the on that insisted Will should come. She laid a concerned hand on Will's shoulder, trying to assure him of Hannibal's good intentions with the blue of her eyes.

"The head of the Behavioral Analysis Unit called me again Hannibal." she said, both eager to show off and move the topic of conversation.

It was a subject on which Hannibal usually brought great insight. She had come to him several times after being asked to be a consultant for the FBI. But if this was an easy topic of conversation for both Doctors, she had forgotten how different it was for Will.

She mentally cursed herself for bringing such an insensitive topic to their dinner table but it was too late, Hannibal rolled with the ball and Will's hand had already started to tremble.

"Ah, did you try recommending me to Crawford? I do think I could bring insight on the man." Hannibal answered casually.

"He is a demon" Will muttered to himself. Hannibal almost missed the comment. "Neither mortal or immortal" he continued, hands shaking at the sight of the pictures dancing in his head.

The stretch of Hannibal's lips was impossible to suppress. His instinct about the man was proving itself truer with every second spent with him.

"He's arrogant. He imagines he's above everybody else" Alana spat, angry at the tortured images she saw. "He's spreading hate and pain in our world" she declared, fixing a point on the wall.

Hannibal barely looked at her. His eyes were focused on the intense concentration on Will's face. His first mistake about the man had been to assume he had a lack of self-confidence. Will knew his worth and was little shifted by people's opinions. They were ripples in his ocean.

He must have stared too long for Will noticed his gaze. The man blushed and averted his blues in order to go back to Alana.

"He'd disagree. He's merely ridding it of a few pests" he answered her.

A small smirk peaked again on Doctor Lecter's lips. This time he couldn't help himself. "Eros is a demon too Will." he commented. Will snapped his neck towards the psychiatrist. Somewhat caught in a net he hadn't seen. Of course his attraction to Alana Bloom hadn't gone unnoticed by the man. And now he was teasing him for it. "Yet you too sing his praises." the Doctor finished.

"What are you talking about Hannibal?" Alana frowned, turning away from her admirer's gaze.

"That is not what I meant by demon." Will looked at the way she scrunched her face in an angry fashion. His eyes zeroed for a millisecond on the red of her nice lips before remembering that the hawk was still watching.

"I believe the definition fits." Doctor Lecter teased, noticing the skin of Will throat stretching as he swallowed.

"The Chesapeake Ripper doesn't think of himself as Eros, weather he is a 'demon' in Diotima's books or not" It was an attempt to stop this dangerous conversation where it was. He had no intention of being vulnerable in front of Alana right now.

"No he doesn't. But I suppose a demon can succumb to another demon's charms.." he replied, eyes raking Will's form.

The mechanic gulped, confused as to what game the Doctor had been playing. He wasn't entirely sure anymore whether he had been teasing him or flirting with him. Covertly, while they had been discussing a murderer.

"Everybody has weaknesses" he said. A little too quickly, a little too sharply.

"But what matters is who sees them. The friend or the foe." Hannibal replied.

Alana rolled her eyes. "Hannibal, the Chesapeake Ripper doesn't have any friends. Just dolls he plays with from time to time."

Hannibal smiled at her reply.

"Yes, dolls." he said softly.

Their discussion had driven off. Even though the rest of the evening had played out much more smoothly, Hannibal and Will being able to converse like gentlemen, sometimes even agreeing, Hannibal's hosts didn't stay long after their last glass of wine.

Will was wary and Alana had taken pity upon him. She was slightly disappointed her friend had shown such reluctance, but after seeing them interact today, she was sure that they were meant to be friends.

After all, Will was always a bit rough on the first approaches, they would take a shine to each other, she was sure.

She ignored his grumbles, and when he told her that he didn't trust him, nor did he like him she had pinched his arm.

"You two get on fine, you just don't see it because you have your pouting veil on." she assured.

Will kissed her goodbye on the cheek before he let her disappear in her house.

When he drove off to his own, he was absentmindedly rubbing the scar on his hand.

*

Hannibal replayed the night's events. Alana had been charming company, as always.

Always very delicate in the way she navigated their conversations. Always a pleasure... but the true jewel of the evening had been delightful William Graham.

Slipping off his tie, Hannibal took a moment to admire his appearance. The long mirror did a good work at reflecting his glory. Age had refined him, he was overall very pleased with how his life had turned out.

He had found himself soured lately. The rude never rested. The opportunist he had encountered was yet to be caught. However, meeting Will tonight had reassured him. Reinvigorating his determination and perhaps distracting him pleasantly too.

He let a small appreciative hum escape his mouth at the memory. The inconsistent twitches of the southerner would have irked him in any other circumstance but this evening he had encouraged them. The way the left corner of his mouth had lifted had been quite interesting too. If he hadn't been able to pick the overbearing scent of dog on him, his facial expression

would have given him away. Funny how mirror neurons worked. They didn't limit themselves at copying human behavior.

The fact that he had bared his teeth had only warmed him that much. As good as the burn of a refined brandy trailing down his esophagus. Yes, indeed it had been a good evening.

The Doctor got under the egyptian coton sheets with an appreciative breath.

Before switching off the lights, he reached for his tablet. He went on tattlercrime.com. The short search proved fruitless. Satisfied, he allowed himself a small purchase.

That night he fell asleep to an audiobook recounting the mythological tail of the Phrygian King.

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading.

Freddie

Chapter Notes

> I love Freddie Lounds. She just knows who she is, what she wants. Does everything to get it. She's dope.

A door opened and a single boot clad foot stuck out, followed by another. A woman got out of the car, chin high and eyes alert. Freddie closed the door slowly, wary of her surroundings. A few strands of her frizzy ginger hair escaped her ear and she placed them back eagerly. The sound of her lips smacking confirmed the dryness of her mouth due to her anticipation.

Freddie walked at a hasty pace, making it look like she knew where she was going. Which she did. Her target was a four by four. The size of the vehicle ideal to smother her form and far enough for it to be harder to recognize her, but not enough to prevent her from snapping pictures.

Once behind it, she took out her camera, grateful that nobody seemed to pay her any mind. She'd been waiting for an opportunity to bump her carrier. Her pay raise unlikely to maintain itself if she didn't keep up with good stories. Like she always said, "either you make them up, or you stalk them". It all nailed down to keeping one's eyes peeled. She was sure of herself. Knew that something was bound to happen today. Her instincts had always been good and they only sharpened with age and practice.

She waited at least fifteen minutes like that. Enough for her heels to hurt from standing too much without movement, and for her brain to get a bit distracted. But it didn't bother her. She was confident a reward would come her way.

The door of the building stood on her right. The gray asphalt austere and dire. Her gaze relentlessly came back towards it, willing for her egg to hatch.

She was about to come closer when Jack Crawford himself came out of the building.

She recognized his build immediately and considered following him. Unsure why it would be of interest and acknowledging the difficulty of the task but certain that the man was upset about something. She was about to put away her camera when Will Graham, no less, stormed after him.

Biting her lips, she's grabbed her camera tighter, the smell of opportunity permeated the air. A flutter of vivid butterflies suddenly seizing her stomach.

The special agent had stopped in his tracks to face the witness. They were frustratingly far. She had been starving for the man to give her anything and couldn't help licking her lips at his sight. The journalist tried to distinguish their facial expressions by squinting her eyes. When she realized it to be of no use, she put her camera up to her eye and used the zoom, snapping a few pictures in the same process. Tapping her feet off-beat to the clicks of her device, she released a sigh that said long about the tension she had worked up by imagining all those scenarios in her head.

The lens confirmed the agitation. Both men were moving their hands exaggeratedly, translating the turmoil off their minds. Will seemed more offensive while Jack seemed to be defensive, that much she had gathered. The black man kept raising his palm up while Graham's hands pointed towards the agent.

There was a pleading gaze about the victim. Will was pressing for something that Jack refused him. The agent stayed stoic despite the insistence of the man. His back was straight and he kept a safe distance from Graham. His heels were rooted to the ground, a sign of stubbornness, which was one of his most defining traits.

Eventually Will let his arm drop to his side as the agent put his hat on, unceremoniously shutting him up. The broad man turned towards his car, pace decisive and determined. Signifying a definite end to whatever conversation they were having.

She took pictures of that, as well as Will's lost look. His body language showed confusion and frustration. She also detected a lot of anger. His hands were raking through his hair and his hips were stiff as he started walking.

This can not be trivial, she thought mirthfully.

Quickly glancing around Freddie waited for Will to pass the four by four. Her anticipation was clawing at her stomach.

She spied the man walking more slowly. She was glad to see him more resigned, knowing it would make her task easier than if he was still in the fire of the argument.

His hands were buried in his pockets and his head hung low, as if he was encouraging his yet too short curls to hide his marine eyes.

She couldn't prevent the smile crawling up her face when finally, her ears distinguished the sound of his steps on the old concrete.

"Will Graham, a few minutes?"

She leapt at him from behind the the car, startling him.

Her voice was a bit shaky with excitement but was overall clear.

As soon as his eyes laid on her he scowled. The red-headed journalist had been an aggressive pain in the past. Will didn't bother hiding his distaste for the woman. Shooting her a dark

look, he pushed passed her, ignoring her presences pointedly. He needed to reach his car and drive off. Hopefully she wouldn't tail him home.

"Mr. Graham, what was that fight with Agent Crawford about?" she pressed, maintaining her teeth in the bone she had dug out.

Will quickened his space. Although the temptation was great, he restrained himself from jogging. He pushed harder on his legs, ignoring the pain in his hand as he squeezed it. His pursuer didn't give up, she chased him through the parking lot.

Freddie was intent on getting her information, she had worked hard for it. The moment she spied Will Graham fighting with Jack Crawford, she knew a bulb was thrown at her and that all she needed to do was plant it in nice soil to let it grow.

When she caught up to the man she tried again: "How's the victim of the Chesapeake Ripper recovering after the events? Did you manage to find relevant details to the investigation?"

"The Ripper didn't do this to me!" he snapped, turning towards her.

They had paused in their chase, the words uttered out loud too important to let anything else distract the pair.

"Not directly anyway. It was a copycat." he reluctantly said to the wide-eyed journalist with gritted teeth.

Freddie eyes filled in time as the large intake of air did her lungs. She looked interested. A thousand gears turning in her mind, grinding on all the possibilities the man had opened.

He hated her for ripping him further of his pride, finishing off the job the killer had started. She had accentuated his status as a victim, stripped him from his intimacy. Freddie had done this like every other journalist. But if Jack wasn't willing to listen, than she would be his shout out.

She tilted her head forwards and asked in a confiding voice: "Do you mean the FBI is working on a new angle?".

Will let a few beats pass before opening his mouth.

"No. That's what I have deduced." he admitted, not without confidence.

She nodded, slowly, biting her lower lip in consideration of the information he had delivered. For once there was something more in the way she looked at Will. Something beyond opportunity and pity.

It was respect.

"Why don't we.. why don't we grab a coffee Mister Graham? I feel like you have some interesting things to tell me" she offered.

He weighed his options. She had made his life more miserable than it was, bashed his self esteem and publicly humiliated him. But he couldn't do this alone. This killer needed to be caught. He needed to be free, would never be if the FBI kept believing it was chasing only one man instead of two.

His tongue darted at the corner of his mouth in a nervous gesture, Freddie observed the conflict on his face. It was clear that he didn't trust her, but she also understood how important it was to him. Her eyes darted from his thoughtful gaze to twitchy fingers. Taking her chance she pressured:

"Mister Graham, I understand we've had conflicting interests in the past" she ignored the laugh her words provoked, and continued further "but right now I want to write a novel paper, and you want you theory to be out. I gather that agent Crawford isn't paying you any mind."

Will looked at the petite red-headed woman. Considered her small frame but the tight muscles of her arms and the sharp angles of her cheek bones. He imagined it must be good to have her as an ally, although they would never come to that. The conflict of interest mentioned too fresh and still threatening their future.

Freddie had one foot in his direction, and the other towards what he assumed to be her car. She wanted this badly and so did he.

"Okay" he said, sounding defeated.

He tailed her and they ended up in the nearest cafe. As soon as he got out of his car she walked up to him, quick pace forgotten and demeanor gentle. No doubt coaxing him into feeling comfortable. He watched her take out a magneto-phone and paper pad from her hand bag and hoped not to regret this.

Freddie pushed the door and held it open for him. As he passed her, their blue eyes met catching them unexpectedly in a brief moment of honesty. She was vulnerable because she depended on him for her story, and he was vulnerable because she could change his fate.

Embarrassed, he walked up to the register. Deciding quickly on simple, inexpensive black coffee. He ordered in what he hoped would be interpreted as a flat voice. The waitress hesitated a second before asking him if he'd have medium or large, and irrationally, Will told himself she knew he was about to betray Jack. Looking behind his shoulder, he spotted Freddie fumbling to get her credit card. Will's attention was snatched back to the waitress when she insisted.

The cafe was small but crowded. In this place, nobody would pay them any mind. There were professors form the academy, students and guests that came for a small reprieve. Work was something they were trying to get off of their minds when they came here.

He remembered the place with an ambiguous fondness. It was the first building he had witnessed on campus that had looked normal.

They chose to sit far away from everybody, far away from the entry door and nonsensical chattering.

As soon as they sat, she started talking.

"Will why don't you tell me a bit more about your theory?" she said gently, coaxing him into trusting her.

He leaned back against his chair. "First let me warn you that I can't share any details of the investigation with you."

She sighed a knowing sigh, tapping her pen against the table in frustration. "We wouldn't want to anger the big bear, would we?" she mused. "Definitely not" he retorted, smiling despite himself.

"Lets start as to why they think you could have been a victim of the Chesapeake Ripper" she offered.

Will nodded, deeming it a good strategy.

He hugged himself in a self-placating attempt that didn't go unnoticed to Freddie.

He talked crisply, in an analytical way but she didn't miss the emotional weight of his body language.

"As you know..my, my fingers were painted golden, and my hand was holding an apple covered in yellow paint." Will breathed loudly through his nose, the sound strained and foreign. Adjusting his glasses nervously, he continued, trying to stay clinical, attempting to dissociate at will. "Seated on a wooden throne sprayed in golden" she provided, helping him.

She laid her hand on top of his, demonstrating that he was not alone and in that moment, Will did believe that she showed genuine sympathy, her professionalism not entirely impervious to his distress.

Although he retrieved his hand, he continued more bravely.

"As you know I was tied"

He left out the mention of the metal bar, piercing his wrist to hold his forearm upward, the apple planted on top of it, shivering he unconsciously touched his left wrist, massaging the scar.

He swallowed and pushed further: "and meant to be displayed in the garage of a house for sail in Eddington"

Freddie listened patiently, so far she knew all the details he mentioned. She felt the emotions coursing through his voice. She realized that the man in front of her was still terrified. Will paled a bit at the memory, his mind not sparing him a detail. It was as if he was still there, in this dark room, half naked, terrified and terribly cold.

"And the scene was theatrical, recounting the story of Midas, the greedy king".

Will nodded at her words.

"The Ripper's first killing was in mid-February, when a few weeks later I was attacked they pined me as number two. Now they've found number three. But since they were wrong about me, I'm not even sure they were for the first one."

"Mr. Graham, you realize that you're a political science professor. You're putting into question the work of the Behavioral science department, what exactly qualifies you for these claims?"

"I was there. I investigated on the Chesapeake Ripper. I wanted to know more about the man that had tried to kill me. I wanted to regain a sense of control. But it didn't feel right. Things were not adding."

Freddie's cheeks were hollowed by the bite she made. Excitement clear in her features. Will knew that he was convincing her. She liked his theory, not only because it would create a spicy critic of the FBI's competence, but also because if it were true. There were two murderers in Chesapeake.

"So tell me" she whispered, leaning forward, "what doesn't click?"

His gut sang, eager to be heard at last. He knew he was right, he just did, and soon, things were going to take a turn.

"I'm not greedy."

It seemed like a strange notion but Freddie guessed that indeed, the man wasn't. His hair cut was unassuming, his clothes borderline dorky. He didn't smell like he was wearing any perfume, didn't own a watch and hadn't chosen a shiny carrier.

"You're saying the Chesapeake Ripper would have portrayed you as Midas only to denounce you as such?"

Will nodded, "Yes, the FBI hasn't found the Ripper's type yet but I believe he would have chosen me for being greedy and displayed me as a greedy pig. This killer only displayed me as such because it looked good. Because it was aesthetic and dramatic."

"Because it looks like the Ripper's job" she finished. They looked at each other for a brief moment, smile peaking at their lips, in an intimate glimpse of intellectual complicity.

Her smile widened and she scribbled on her pad. When the tip left the paper she assured him that she liked his story, a lot.

Jazz Scene

Chapter Summary

After seeing Freddie, Will needs a distraction for his nerves.

Chapter Notes

Thanks for the comments and kudos guys, hope you'll enjoy this read.

When Hannibal had called him to invite him at a concert of some sorts, Will had jumped on the occasion. There were a few things that prompted him to overlook distrust and depression, and self-preservation was amongst them.

Ever since he had talked to Freddie, he kept feeling his phone vibrate in his pocket. It sent his heart hammering in a frenzy. Only to have him discover it was a figment of his imagination. That no one had called him.

It had occurred several times already and it was driving him crazy. He almost thought about calling Jack up front. Instead he had thrown his phone on the bed and gone about his day without looking at it.

He was finishing an order for a fly fishing lure when the phone had actually buzzed. He had expected it to be Jack, or Alana, or anybody else really, but Hannibal's name was on the screen.

The ever persistent Dr. Lecter.

He probably would have declined his offer if it had been any other day, but tonight, tonight he needed a distraction.

As he had opened his phone, he had almost been flooded with relief at the sound of the foreigner's annoying voice.

He was clear on what he had done. Was still sure of his course of action. But was still wary of the consequences. And they didn't only interest the FBI. Also the Chesapeake Ripper. And the assaulter.

His forehead broke in a sweat at the idea of having to confront all of them again. Of being judged, fought against, doubted. Doubt was such an ugly sensation.

Hannibal Lecter had sounded surprised at the speed at which he had accepted the invitation to go out.

The man was smart enough to have expected reticence on his part. He had taken his victory graciously and had waited for him patiently in front of *The Construed*, later that night.

That was how Will Graham had found himself at 8pm in an unknown part of Baltimore in front of a bar. Solely accompanied by his sour fear and the peculiar man.

"I didn't imagine you would like this sort of music Dr. Lecter" Will commented as he arrived, a note of provocation in his voice.

Hannibal raised an eyebrow at the comment, the left corner of his lips tugging upwards at the jealousy Will was trying hard to conceal.

"Jazz has the power to bring a vulnerable modesty and honesty in its interpreters that I find amusing to witness. Especially the improvisations" he admitted.

Will nodded absentmindedly, already losing interest in the man to the benefit of their surroundings.

Hannibal noticed his partner's gaze drifting towards the high tables on their left and the impressive collection of alcohols that found a place anywhere and everywhere behind the glass bar near them.

"However, since it is not my preferred expression of music, I do tend to be more expectant regarding the performance."

Will turned his attention momentarily back to him. Frowning at the idea of the psychiatrist being "more expectant" than usual, wondering where the leniency found itself when he claimed to be more tolerant.

"I suspect you are certain of the quality of this show, or you wouldn't have brought me here." he pointed.

Hannibal smiled. "Indeed. It will be the second time I assist their performance. I am sure it will have you delighted. There is a certain uncertainty in the saxophone player whenever he strikes faster sequences that I find refreshing."

He stopped talking to pad his neck with the pastel handkerchief he kept in his pocket. Will watched him wipe his sweaty brow with slight mockery. Such was the price for insisting to be in three piece costumes.

Hannibal folded it back and tried to justify himself: "Last time, there weren't as many people", he said looking around.

Will did the same. Indeed, the place was cramped. Middle aged couples and groups of fancy people, obviously connoisseurs or trying to appear so in their zoot suits were flooding the place. Will didn't even know they still made them. It was all colorful and fancy but didn't make him feel too out of place. Everybody looked original and creative. He guessed Hannibal had demonstrated some eccentricity already. He shouldn't be to surprised to see him here after all.

Both of them started to make way through the small crowed that had already gathered at the foot of the wooden stage. When Will made a motion to ask a lady if they could borrow the unused seats at her table Hannibal grabbed his elbow. Will turned around sharply, forcing Hannibal to take a step back.

"I reserved seats Will. I didn't want any bit of the performance to escape us because of our physical discomfort" he said sternly.

He was expecting another of Will's judgmental gazes but instead he read relief on his face. Will let his shoulders drop, releasing them from a tension he hadn't paid attention to.

"Thanks" he breathed out. Loving the idea of being able to sit in the empty seats at the front row he could spy behind a feather. He relaxed decently at the idea of being away from the cramped bodies.

Hannibal's eyes crinkled. "You are my guest Will, as I invited you here. It would be terrible of me not to assure your utter comfort." Will made a jerky movement of his head, suddenly uncomfortable. He slid his hands into his pockets, avoiding eye contact more obviously.

Hannibal smiled, knowing that attention was the first and best way to wedge the man's heart. Or at least lure doubt.

Two of the chairs, in the middle, no less, had a paper where Hannibal's name was printed in dark letters. Both man sat side by side, shoulders touching from the proximity of the seats. A waitress came in sight, peaking at the pair to determine if they wanted to take anything. She was wearing a seventies styled dress that matched the flower in her frizzy hair. Hannibal waived her over, checking with Will to see if he wanted anything.

Will indeed felt strongly for scotch. The drink seemed too natural in the atmosphere for him not too indulge. Although he hoped the price won't be as ridiculous as they tended to be in that sort of place.

The waitress came back right before the artists made their entry. They were styled like most people in the club, not even trying to match, a lazy smile playing on all of their mouths. Will actually liked the atmosphere. It was amiable. He felt invisible and unseen.

His eyes drifted to Hannibal's face. It was directed towards the stage, eyes gleaming with anticipation. He looked quite royal, probably wearing the same expression Louis the XIV used to when assisting at his protege's work.

As soon as the trumpet player's lips pressed to the mouthpiece, he knew it was going to be good. The man's body was relaxed in all the right places to deliver an optimal performance.

Will shivered at the first languid string of notes. He closed his eyes for a brief moment, only to open them back at the singers introduction. The voice was very deep, ragged and smoothed like old leather by one too many concerts.

He had to give that round to Hannibal, the man did have nice taste. Said man was beaming at the musicians. A smile spilling gratefulness, as if he was praising their existence.

He noticed Will's stare and turned around, offering the raven haired man an honest open smile. He was a child, happy to share a hobby with a friend. Will considered that this was probably the first time he saw the doctor being genuine. He smiled back for the heck of it, the beauty was enchanting and the sentiment of peace that roused in him was soothing his wounds.

He caught Hannibal looking at him with a triumphant gleam several times during the interpretation, otherwise they didn't exchange and their attention was very much focused on the sound of the jazzmen.

Hannibal got up when they finished, clapping his strong hands together.

He was content. The music had pleased his ears and the oyster that was Will Graham had showed a flash of weakness.

Will did get up alongside Hannibal, ears ringing with the woops of those behind him, whistling their approval to the four artists.

He realized that neither of them had touched their drinks and suggested they took them outside. He needed fresh air. The performance had made him forget how warm it was but now it was fully coming back to him.

Hannibal smiled at his initiative and trailed behind him, following closely despite the crowd.

Once outside, Will was surprised to see stars in the sky. Time had flown faster than he had expected it.

He tilted the glass to his mouth, enjoying the fresh burn that prickled his taste buds. Turning towards the doctor he saw that he was observing him again.

"I have to admit that I enjoyed myself Doctor" Will offered as a compliment.

Tilting his chin, Hannibal searched the man's face, amused by his defenses. "Are you reluctant because it would prove Alana right, or because it makes you vulnerable?"

Will scoffed, an odd laughter coming from the back of his throat. "Vulnerable? Don't flatter yourself Doctor Lecter. I am wary of what I cannot see."

Hannibal didn't reply, but the light swing he made with his neck proved the blow had landed. The psychiatrist took a long drag of his beverage, making it stay in his mouth and burn his palate.

Dr. Lecter understood that if Will had accepted that he had more too offer, he hadn't let his guard down a bit.

"Tell me Will, how did you meet with Ms Bloom? I'm curious to know how your diametric personalities came to kinship."

Will leaned against the wall before answering, wrinkling his nose at the smell of smoke. "We're not exactly antipodal Dr. Lecter, actually we're quite similar on several points."

The doctor resisted coming closer and leaned on his left leg instead, making his small hip cock towards him. When he answered he was fixing a point above Will's head.

"I understand that both of you are driven by fear." he started, noting Will appreciative pout. "and that you, as much as Alana are kind and generous. But meanwhile both of you are optimistic, you are so knowing the darkness of the world whereas she denies its existence. And you are not exactly social Will."

Said man quirked his eyebrows, "it doesn't mean I don't get what I want."

There was a challenge in his tone. An affirmation of the dormant power that could be awakened in him.

No indeed, the word 'shy' didn't fit in the description of William Graham. Hannibal smiled at Will's arousal. Approving of his assertion and slightly amused at the contradictory signals he sent. Although now that he reflected more closely upon them, the problem hadn't been the signals in themselves but his interpretation after all.

He leaned against the wall next to Will and set his finished glass on the nearby table. Turning towards him he asked him if he had met her on campus. Will scoffed at that, taking the last swig of scotch and smacking his lips loudly he assured the doctor that he hadn't the type of money she had had.

"Which wedged you apart some I assume".

The man's gaze was concentrated on Will's face, brushing his forehead and cheeks with attention. He indulged in the man's frown and the flare of his triangular nostrils as he shook his head.

"Yes and no. You were not entirely wrong saying that we are opposite. There is and always will be a moat between her and I."

It wasn't said without frustration.

"Most probably words unspoken" Hannibal offered. His eyes were searching the contact of Will's but they stayed trained on the parking lot ahead. "I think you and her tend to hide from your feelings in general." Although Will didn't particularly enjoy being analyzed by the man, he couldn't say he was wrong. He convened and added that she 'over thought to the point of getting lost in herself'.

The subject seemed to drop from here and Hannibal offered Will another glass, which he declined. He hadn't drank enough water during the day nor had he eaten before coming, his appetite still being fragile some. The one generous glass had been enough to make his head heavier.

"I should get going Dr. Lecter" he said, pushing off the wall. "Thank-you for the evening" he offered, extending his hand for a shake to Hannibal's greatest delight. He took the opportunity to enjoy Will's skin, enjoying the warmth and the shape of his fingers on his palm.

They made eye contact and Will's gaze was soft with sleep and sharp with thoughts, the smile the doctor offered was returned and he parted in the direction of his car, leaving the man very well pleased with the development of the evening.

Reconnaissance

Hannibal frowned under the artificial light of his desk. He swiped the article back to the beginning and re-read it. Then compared it to the precedent one; '***Chesapeake Ripper Victim Escapes***'.
He pinched his lips as he remembered the slight of the author's words. Re-watched the picture of the victim and zoomed on the now familiar face of Will Graham.

A strange sense of unease seized him. He felt both cheater and cheated. His eyes crinkled with amusement as he observed the lines of that preoccupied face.

It had occurred to him that Will Graham was a man full of surprises.

He looked at the quote and read it out loud, for his own pleasure. '*The Chesapeake Ripper isn't a wannabe. He is. Authentic.*'

He had been right.

The title of the newly written article from that nosy woman was '***FBI on the Wrong Track; The Ripper Framed?***'

It brought a wide long smile on his lips. He couldn't help but preen. Although the FBI's lack of knowledge about his whereabouts were a practical factor, he couldn't help the pedestrian pleasure of being recognized.

Hannibal reclined in his chair and stared away. Pensive and rekindled.

He pictured the dark frustrated eyebrows jumping and frowning at his attempts at conversation. The ridiculous starry eyed softness the man's eyes had for their friend Alana. The jitters and the grumbling.

Layers and layers hiding a presumably interesting core.

Dr. Lecter was impressed. He leaned over and pulled one of his drawings out of the bottom drawer of his desk.

He looked at it and pursed his lips, as it clearly didn't suit anything anymore. He only had time to erase the background and redraw a new location before he had to stop. He had guests tonight and he had a lot of chopping to do.

As he observed the myriad of colors displayed before him, created by the purple beets, the green parsley and cabbage, the vibrant orange carrots and the rounded redness of the tomatoes, an uplifting sentiment brought the same smile to is face once more. He was glad Alana had invited herself and Will, eager to polish the rugged last evening. She was obsessed with giving Will a good outward image.

*

Hannibal led his guest through the long corridor and stopped at a room with a fireplace. It was dark and empty. Absent of flames or logs and Will seemed immediately drawn to the stone chimney.

Hannibal lit a dim light to reveal the subtle caramel of the walls. The beige curtains were drawn, Will had liked this room at first glance, albeit the pompous busts and trinkets displayed.

Hannibal watched from the entrance, as Will leaned in and touched the stone. He saw him rub his fingers against it and smell the tips. Seemingly enjoying the mineral scent.

He joined him opposite and waited until their eyes met.

The question he had meant to ask was interrupted by a flick of Will's wrist.

"Can't help but fill every space with something can you?"

Ah, so not that tense anymore are we? Hannibal didn't know if he was amused by the bite in his guest's tone or if he was irritated.

"I like to root my presence in the places I own, as well as always have something to occupy my eyes. Beauty is something nobody can ever tire off."

Will raised an eyebrow, as if doubting the aesthetics of his room and grinned: "rooting your presence with so many impersonal things though...seems superficial, or like hiding in plane sights. But who am I to judge maybe these generic art pieces have a meaning to you." he answered, turning to boop a woman's marble nose.

Hannibal balled his fists and came closer, a hand away from Will.

"I suppose you would enjoy the more utilitarian places of my home." he said in a dark breath.

Will didn't freeze he just shrugged.

"What do you have in store?"

"Let me show you the room where I work my meat." he said with a curious smile.

Will gulped his whiskey down and followed. He was bored. He didn't know what he was doing here and if Alana didn't show up soon he'd make up an excuse to leave.

They walked back to the first floor until they came to a concealed trap door.

Perfect to hide bodies, Will almost said. But it had provoked an overwhelming nausea. His paranoia hit him hard and fast without him being prepared for it. He cursed his dry humor which had offended his own person. Per habit he rubbed his right hand before forcing it back down. Where was Alana?

He was standing behind the Doctor who seemed broader and darker, towering and forcefully powerful.

Will actually froze as Dr. Lecter opened the door for them, he clutched his pants as he fought not to take a step back.

"I was rather impressed by that article you wrote with Lounds" the host said without turning back.

Hannibal didn't seem to care when he was met with no answer, instead he took a step and engulfed in the dark stair case.

He disappeared from Will sight and Will couldn't bare to follow him. Dark was unsafe.

When he didn't hear Will following him Hannibal did turn around.

The man was standing with a dazed look at the entrance of the pathway. He was rigid and sweaty, the smell of fear was starting to permeate the air.

"Come on now Will, I thought you wanted to see utilitarian rooms. What are you frigid about, what would be the odds."

Will visibly gulped. Apparently not appreciating the joke. Will's jaw visibly tightened as his fingers flexed. He stared at Hannibal with the violent intent of a fuck you and heavily stepped towards him.

His footsteps were heavy and loud in defiance and soon he was blinded by the dark, only aware of the positions of objects thanks to the grey shades.

"I keep bigger butcher's cuts in this room, I only use it on big occasions."

Hannibal's voice didn't echo or bounce against the walls, it was well isolated.

"The top switch broke quite unfortunately, let me find the bottom one."

Will bit back a snarky remark. As if he cared the least about how well and good Hannibal's house was. *Proper Hannibal, handsome Hannibal. Plain, plain, plain.*

His irritation grew bigger as the man's hand wrapped around his wrist without his permission.

"You smell strongly Will, relax"

Will withdrew his hand and half-barked: "Don't come close to me.", "And keep your nose to yourself." he added.

He couldn't see Hannibal's expression well in the dark but it didn't prevent him from feeling a trembling anger suddenly rising from the man's chest.

It was gone as fast as it had appeared, almost like an hallucination.

"So tell me, how did you come to these conclusions about the Chesapeake Ripper? I didn't picture you as a groupie." he said instead, not commenting.

Will barked at the same time as the light flooded the place.

It was clean, longer than Will had expected and contained an impressive array of knives and a large freezer.

"One of my patients is a hunter. He brings me some boar from time to time." Hannibal said, lifting the cooler's door.

Will didn't look, the sight of red wasn't to his taste this instant. He turned around from the sight and checked the ceiling for spiders. There were none.

"I'm not a groupie, I just did my research. Like a responsible adult. I don't care about the Chesapeake Ripper."

Hannibal, once again came closer. "Have you ever thought of joining the police forces Will? I think you have a keen nose."

Will stepped aside, away from his warm breath. "It's just an article Hannibal. Leave it."

There was a warning in his voice, a hidden storm of fear. A small treasure trunk to open.

When Will made a motion to go back up, Hannibal closed the distance between their bodies.

He could see the pores of the skin on his neck.

He raised a hand, only to be interrupted by the ring of his bell.

Will almost jumped up the stairs, unconcerned with leaving his host behind and flew to Alana to Hannibal's amusement.

He joined the couple with a broad smile that broaden to the sight of Alana's pupils dilating at his sight.

Apparently crimson was a good color on him. He took her hand to kiss it, this time without the interruption of Will. But the glare didn't go unnoticed to the psychiatrist.

After a savory borscht and strawberry pavlova, they moved to the music room to Alana's request.
Will excused himself to the rest room, and both parties gravitated towards each other, as if they had waited for him to leave.

Sleeping Pills

Hannibal was enjoying a luncheon break in his luscious office situated on the second floor of a decently architectured building in the center of Baltimore.

His maroon suit matched particularly well the colored splashes of crimson and wood that covered the surface of his practice.

The colors where supposed to evoke hearth and maybe a tonality of austerity and grave seriousness when one focused on the ebony furniture.

He wedged himself well in the decor, assuming the position of a walking painting. The beauty of his the controlled authenticity and fluid muscles enhancing the domesticity of the place.

It was overall reassuring and intimidating, like its owner, or so Will Graham would think so a few hours later.

Hannibal received his phone call early in the afternoon. He answered distantly, stating his title and name, expecting one of his patients.

How he was surprised to hear the voice of Will Graham on the other side of the line.

He allowed a charmed smile to cross his face as he waited patiently for the man to confess whatever he needed from him.

Will breathed out in a defeated voice: "Would you find some time to take an appointment with me?".

Hannibal was confounded at Will's acceptance towards his need for help. A tickle of energy created the need in his fingers to drum. He was all too happy to hold a portion of the man's trust in his hands.

"I'm glad you have called me Will." he answered gracefully.

It disappointed him to pronounce the following sentence: "Sadly, on professional grounds I have to refuse."

Will's breath was loud on the other side of the phone.

Dr. Lecter finished with an apologetic tone. "It would be unethical for me to treat a friend."

He wanted to add something else but Will interrupted him.

"We're not friends Dr. Lecter."

The tone was slightly harsh, and when Will resumed talking again, he forced his voice to be gentler, reminding himself that he needed that favor.

"Please, would you consider booking an appointment with me. It won't take long. I just need a prescription."

"Ah."

Dr. Lecter was disappointed. A prescription meant Will wanted to treat the symptoms. Not the cause. So much for a free crack into Will Graham's mind.

"I am free this evening Will. But bare in mind that I can't hand you a prescription without at least speaking with you. I couldn't in my right conscience."

Will let out a relieved sigh nonetheless.

Dr. Lecter stayed with the phone glued to his ear a few minutes after Will had hung up. He was bothered. Bothered by Will's insistence on being distant, hidden.

…

Will arrived ten minutes early. He looked terrible. Worse than on Thursday night. His skin looked clammy and clay like, his eyes were sunk in and circles were digging under his washed out eyes.

"Water?" Dr. Lecter offered, choosing not to comment on the fact that the man hadn't waited for his answer before barging in.

Will looked at Hannibal, who was seated. His legs were crossed and his eyebrows raised, obviously waiting for an answer. He was the perfect picture of control. He couldn't help but despise him a little more.

Hannibal made him feel like a lesser man.

When Will frowned instead of answering him, Hannibal took the liberty to fetch him a glass.

Thankfully the man was obedient enough to drink when he brought it too him. Will stared at the water and emptied in one go, loudly and messily.

Will didn't beat around the bush once he had set it down: "I need a sleeping prescription." He shook his head as Hannibal opened his mouth to answer. "No, no, no...you don't understand. I can't sleep Hannibal, I can't sleep. It's driving me crazy."

He raked a hand through his hair while the other came down to wipe itself on his faded jeans.

"I haven't had a peaceful night in weeks and it suddenly gotten worse. I pulled three all-nighters in a row, I have nightmares. I need pills."

"Will..." he started softly.

Will closed his eyes as he could guess from the Dr.'s tone of voice, he wasn't going to get what he wanted.

"...giving you medication will only relieve your outward symptoms. Your internal suffering won't stop, and might probably resurface through other means of expression."

He leaned forward, waiting for Will to open back his eyes before continuing, "I cannot turn a blind eye on your problems, as a Doctor, or as someone who cares for you."

Will rolled his eyes.

"Just give me the damn pills Hannibal, for fuck's sake."

Will's body went rigid as he caught up on the actual tone of voice he had employed on the Doctor.

The man facing him looked unamused, and he could discern in the smoothing of his lines a thinning patience.

Will finally stopped his pacing and slumped on the couch. He looked like he was about to cry and Hannibal was mildly impressed to find him so articulate after understanding what he was going through.

Will grumbled and buried his face into his hands.

"I'm sorry, please, I just need to sleep, this is torture..please"

A bubble of saliva threatened to escape the corner of his mouth as his face distorted itself in the mask of sorrow.

Hannibal inhaled the smell of fear and tears emanating from the man. Revealing in the stench of his misery.

It was hard not to rejoice about the leverage he had on the man right now. Will looked absolutely pathetic. He had been nothing but rude and haughty and here he was, begging him for his help.

Hannibal tugged at his tie as if to put it back in place and got up.

Will lifted his face and he saw Hannibal crouching down in front of him. The man patted his knee and assured:

"I am going to prescribe anxiolytics Will, they should partially relieve some of your stress."

Hannibal stopped him before he could thank him and continued.

"They will not be for more than a month though, as I do not want you to grow dependent on them or to ignore your mental state."

Will nodded, already too grateful for the little reprieve he was allowed.

A good Doctor would have refused to prescribe him anything without a proper consultation. He had hopped, Doctor Lecter, who had multiplied his attempts to form a friendship with

him, would be weak enough to give in to him. It had worked.

"I am relieved you came to me Will. Your situation is by no means enviable. Victims of assault have an array of traits to deal with and to think.."

"Alana told you." It wasn't a question. The cold certainty in his voice made Hannibal wish for an uproar. He wanted Will to shout.

Instead the man fell back behind walls of concrete, protected and far-away from him.

"Will I have known from the start you suffer from PTSD. There are some secrets the mind can't hide. I read the paper, I would have found out." he soothed.

"No but you knew before. All this time you have known. It wasn't her story to tell." he spat.

Will was angry with everybody. With himself, with Alana that had failed to protect him, and with Hannibal, simply for knowing. For seeing.

"Do not direct your anger towards Alana" Hannibal pressed. "She only had the best intentions in mind. She was concerned for your well being, sought advice."

Will made a dismissive gesture.

"If she had an inkling of what's going through my mind, she would have shut her mouth. She's not trying to help me, she's trying to reassure herself."

"Don't be unfair Will, she cares for you."

Will turned his head away. Beaten and regretful. "I didn't want you to see me as weak."

Hannibal's eyes shone. He leaned closer, laying both of his palms on the teacher's shoulders.

"You are the only enemy of your outward image."

Will lifted his head, he saw something dance in the dark eyes, something he couldn't read. Something dangerous and sweet. A promise for hot warm spice. That would leave his throat burning and his heart hammering in his chest.

He was still kneeling at Will's feet, which allowed him to push him back down when he tried to get up.

Will looked at him bewildered and Hannibal smiled at him. Eyes soft and mouth easy.

"It's already starting to be late Will, I think you should get your pills tomorrow. You are in no state to drive, and I assume you came here by taxi, correct?"

Will bit his lips.

"Let me relax you for today. With your consent, I will apply some base hypnosis techniques. They are by no means effective on the long run, but will allow you to sleep tonight.

Tomorrow, you'll be rested and will go to the pharmacy."

Will felt he had probably surpassed his allowed quota of petulant today. Besides, his emotional bout had drained him, and sleep sounded so nice.

"Lie back Will, I'll take care of you." Hannibal said in his accented voice.

Will closed his eyes and exercised himself to detach the voice from the man itself. He tried to forget everything he knew from Dr. Lecter, let go of his fear, his envy. Imagined the voice belonged to someone else. He let Hannibal's mellow tone guide him to a warm, white, safe heaven.

He kept hearing the Dr.'s honeyed voice repeating the words 'core', and 'secure'.

Eventually his shoulders started to sag and he found his body grow incredibly warm and heavy.

When it stopped, a wave of peace had washed over his body. He felt like a newborn, cuddled in the arms of a generous mother.

He opened his eyes offering him an open mark of gratitude. Hannibal couldn't help his muscles responding to him, giving him a soft smile of appreciation of his own.

He helped Will up to his feet. Will allowed him to touch his body without retracting or freezing.

For a man that feared so much losing control, Will had proven far too easy to hypnotize.

"No need to call a taxi Will, I will drive you myself. No, please don't protest." he interjected, "if not for the sake of our friendship, than for the sake of Alana's. She would be truly disappointed to hear I hadn't served you."

Will frowned, "You won't tell her anything, will you?"

Hannibal searched his face before assenting.

"This will be our secret then" he said taking his coat.

They walked outside, the sun was starting to set. Hannibal took a moment to appreciate it, feeling oddly serene.

Will fell asleep easily in his car, letting Hannibal drive him safely home, to Wolf Trap, where his lovely dogs were waiting for him.

He woke up on his own, precisely when Hannibal parked the car. He was a bit ashamed of having fallen asleep so fast, but also relieved to see that Hannibal's seance at actually been beneficial.

It made the sixty-five bucks he lost worth it.

"Thank-you again for your help Hannibal, I appreciate it." he said, not shying away from Hannibal's eyes.

"Of course, you may always come to me Will. Do not restrain yourself."

Will looked at him quizzically before closing the passenger's door.

Hannibal watched him walk away, his footsteps drowned by the barking of the numerous dogs he owned.

"Sleep tight, Will." he murmured, before starting the engine.

Preparations

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will roused after a delightful night's sleep.

He could barely lift his limbs. They were so deeply melted he felt he was trapped to the bed. It almost made him want to forsake the pills and go to Lecter's this evening. But he'd be damned if caught dependent on someone.

Although coming to the Doctor had proven to be salutary, he couldn't help the sensation of being stuck on the ridge of a cliff. The sea roaring under his feet and rocks begging to break his bones. Letting himself see more of Lecter felt like prying off a nail, one by one, each time.

He checked his phone and realized he had slept through phone calls. They all came from Jack Crawford.

William was sure of his analysis. Freddie's insight had also brushed away any remaining doubts he had carried. He was ready.

Yesterday's hypnosis was still affecting him. He possessed a strange calm in his core. He nurtured that feeling by welcoming it, neither questioning or doubting it.

He wondered if that's what Hannibal felt, everyday, in his impeccable suits and speeches. Once again he felt the pull of envy in his gut.

Hannibal Lecter looked anal. He seemed prepared, disciplined, aware. But it wasn't true. He was relaxed, he understood his surroundings and was ridden of fear. Hannibal Lecter was free.

It was beautiful. Will loathed him for possessing the confidence he lacked. Loathed him for the absence of struggle with himself.

Alana had been right. Lecter was an interesting man.

He opened the door, rinsed out and scared of losing Alana too a greater man. He was greeted with one unique apple on his door step.

Will texted Freddie Lounds as he arrived at Crawford's headquarters.

Thanks again for the article. I was called in by Jack. I'll tell you how the meeting goes.

*

Hannibal woke up late. He had slept dreadfully, as if he had traded his peace for the sake of Will's. He was not amused as he glared at the clock.

In the shower, he scrubbed himself harder than needed, letting the frustration seep through his skin.

Dear Will Graham had proven to be an interesting distraction, but his design would not suffer longer from it.

He tugged at his cock and realized it had gotten half-hard.

He wasn't petty enough to deny the attention it needed had been roused by William.

The dark-haired man was a sight for the eyes.

His mind a rich room to explore and the strikes of his features jarring.

Hannibal considered the time and allowed himself to squeeze his testicles with the pads of his fingers. He liked to act upon what felt good. Right now, imagining Will Graham crying on his knees, mouth open, awaiting his semen felt exactly like that.

The tears soon became blood and he came with a heavy grunt as the sudden image of Will biting of a piece of his thigh jumped in his mind.

He watched the thick whites get drained down by the water before stopping the water.

He had a sense that things indeed, would need to be sped up, or otherwise he would be caught up in uncertainty.

*

After a tiring trial at the FBI? Will had gone straight to Hannibal's house. It had already become a habit. Him being dependent on the man. Just like he had quickly become dependent on Alana for his humanity.

It was not about liking the man. Nor was it about attraction. It had more to do with needing him.

Hannibal Lecter was an avid listener. He asked intelligent questions. He didn't let concern come in the way. Will had come to value his opinion and guidance.

Somehow it meant Alana had been right. He had needed to see someone. To sort everything out, to anchor himself.

He thought he was being rude. He probably ought to pay the man, come at a regular hour. But maybe if it worked so well, it was because Will could pretend this wasn't an actual support session. Plus Hannibal had offered.

"When I was a small child. I was very reserved and kept to myself." the Doctor started in a sure voice. "So much so that I never voiced any of my worries, and my mother rarely ever saw me cry. I have few memories of her. Although each one of them, I stay fond off. "

His face pinched before relaxing itself again.

The story teller wasn't focused on Will. His eyes seeing old distant memories made blurry by age. He opened his mouth again to speak, and Will couldn't help but cling to its red opening.

"I was upset over something my private tutor had said about my skills. His words had been a branding mark on my impressionable self. Of course I hadn't said anything to mother or anybody about the incident. But I probably wasn't as subtle about my mood as my five year old self thought." he scoffed, hand caressing the air. "Mother asked me what was wrong. Of course I denied her. She insisted than, and when it became clear to her that I wouldn't be opening my mouth she said to me something very interesting."

Doctor Lecter prolonged eye contact and Will crossed his arm, suddenly retracting from his leaning position.

"That your tears were the gift of your pride?"

Hannibal laughed softly, eyes sparkling. The man was probably aware of his unhealthy bitterness towards him, and was too collected to properly care. Which made it worse for Will.

"No," he corrected "she told me that what my eyes refused to express, my hands could."

Will's eyes shot up and Hannibal's met them with calm enthusiasm.

"So she made you draw your anger?"

"Yes. I disfigured my teacher with the point of my charcoal." Will smiled, quizzical.

"I would have liked to see your design" he joked.

Hannibal squinted his eyelids, sharing a joke with himself. One that Will wanted to know. He wanted this intimacy with Hannibal. He wanted to please him and know him. As much as he wanted to humiliate him and abandon him.

"When was the last time you cried Will?"

"You want me to draw my trauma Hannibal?" he asked. His voice was dangerously clipped and Hannibal knew the strings he was playing were worn and strung.

"I think it would be therapeutically, yes. I could even draw for you."

"And then what? I take the drawing, dance on it and burn it in the flame singing old voodoo incantations?" he barked.

His mocking gaze was met with Hannibal's stern posture.

A sense of shame overwhelmed Will, it was so strong that he had to get up. Getting to his feet he started apologizing, hands in his hair, eyes darting around the room in the vain hope to find an escape.

"I'm sorry Hannibal, I don't know what possessed me.." he stopped because that was a lie. He and him knew it. The doctor was sitting with his hands folded on his lap and legs crossed. He

was austere and patient. Undoubtedly waiting for the apology to deepen. After all he was offering comfort, and was met with laughter.

"Hannibal, I just can't. It won't work like that. And you're comparing a five year old's wounded ego with..with.." he groaned at the mounting frustration that the conversation had sparked in him. "I'm going crazy with hatred and wrath Hannibal. Do you even know what this means? I just..." he started pacing under the man's watchful gaze, body punctuating hysterically his words in repetitive gestures. "I don't have control anymore." he tugged at his hair and grasped the back of the chair violently. "Do you know what type of dreams I have? What type of urges?"

Will rubbed his jaw before throwing his hands in the hair. "Whenever I see a trunk I feel like running away till my heart stops." Will started to shake his head. "But that's not the worst. No, no. Sometimes I get so upset, so angry that I feel like using a knife on anything. Like breaking and smashing. I want to hear bones crack and blood spatter."

He stopped his pacing. Regretting the divulgation of these intimate thoughts. Of these horrible repulsive thoughts, where everything was about setting himself free and dominance.

He bit his tongue as punishement and refused to make eye I contact.

"I don't know why I'm telling you this. You're going to send me to the loony bin." he whispered.

Hannibal breathed through his nose loud enough for Will to look back up at him.

"Suggesting that I draw it away I..it makes me look like.."

"Like you are weak?" the doctor interrupted. "Like you are fussing over nothing?". Will nodded vigorously, thankful to be understood at some point, desperate for understanding. God he was so alone in this.

Alana would never understand.

"Will, I want you to calm down for me." Said man only grasped the chair tighter but his attention was focused now. "You are panicking. But you are in no need to perform immediate action. I want you to realize that. I want you to breath and listen to the sound of my voice."

Will's heartbeat slowed on its own accord. Finding reprieve in the soothing voice of the doctor. Exhaling loudly Will clutched his forehead in a gesture of defeat. He sat back down, almost dropping on the armchair. Hannibal's eye had lost their patient and amused glint but Will was too upset to pay close attention to his host. Said man got up and Will worried for an instant that he had gotten too familiar too fast with Hannibal.

Yet the man returned, drawing tools in hand. Before sitting back down, he smacked his lips in an odd way, the gesture aimed at no one but himself. Gears were turning in the doctor's head and Will wished he knew how to interpret it. Hannibal wasn't angry at his outburst. He was impatient with him but for a different reason. Uncomfortable with the gloom of his thoughts he forced himself out of his head and focused back on Hannibal.

The man was back in his chair and was obviously waiting for him to pay attention.

"There are different ways of healing from trauma William. As you know hypnosis, as well as other techniques allow the patient to relive the event in the comfort of guidance. I understand that you do not feel free to open yourself to the toxic flow of memories." His eyes flicked to Will's guarded ones. His expression took a gentler hue, the muscle of his cheeks softening.

"Right now you are under a siege Will. You can wait out the winner or draw your sword."

Will pinched his lips, nodding dryly.

"I want you to describe me the scenes you remember, the details. Leave none out. You can trust me Will, I can relieve your brain."

Will lightly turned his head away. He was rubbing his chin with his fingers in a way that reassured Hannibal.

"He smelled bitter" he finally said after a long pause.

Will stared at his hand in disbelief. All he could see was skin. Then it started moving. Getting increasingly whiter at a focused point until a bulge appeared. It grew bigger, till the roundness of the mound broke in a sharp twisting pinch to let the metal bar pierce his sensitive flesh. It stuck out the middle of his palm. Burning him and chocking his breath. He didn't have enough breath to scream.

He stared at it in disbelief. Then at his porcine blue eyes and those fat lips smeared with spit by a greedy tongue. Then back at his hand. Blood came slower than he imagined, the bulk of the intrusion preventing a steady flow from irrupting. There was barely any of it.

The metal was a cold contrast with the molting inside of his flesh. It was violently rough. Stung and burned like a thousand bee stings. He heard from a distance the scrunch of the apple being impaled on the rod, untop of his hand. The smell of fruit and sugar filled his nostrils. Making him gag with its combined scent with the blood.

Maybe he did vomit on himself a bit.

He'd never be able to eat apple-pie again.

There was a weird clanking sound. As if the man was shaking something. His form was distant to his unfocused eyes.

A bottle, spray paint Will managed to realize. Golden.

The industrial smell hid the one of his sweat momentarily. It burned his lungs but he couldn't move his head away, he desperately needed the oxygen. The pain made him pant like he had run a marathon.

He saw the killer remove his glove from the corner of his eyes.

He was probably smiling.

A bare hand landed flat on his heaving chest. The sweat making the contact slippery and messy.

He kept it pressed hard, a fingerpad planted over a pink nipple while the other reached for his own pants.Will didn't take away his eyes from the man's round face.

"I' will kill you" he warned

"Will. Will, are we okay to continue?"

Will had to concentrate on the Doctor's features for a moment. Taller. Thinner. Yes, more muscle control. Shorter arms. Smaller head.

"Will?"

Different voice...Will wiped his sweaty forehead with his scared palm and dragged it on his dirty jeans.

"I got lost for a minute." he justified.

"I saw that" the Doctor replied. He looked flushed and unconcerned.

Or was he politely trying to de-dramatize the situation?

"I think we should take a break." Will finally said.

"I don't think so." Dr. Lecter countered rapidely. "Your descriptions are necessary. Please, pursue."

Will rubbed his face. Trying not to get angry.

"I'm tired, Doctor.", he gritted.

Hannibal waited until Will looked at him before answering: "But will you sleep?"

Will raised to his feet.

"That's enough for now", his tone was final.

If Will had bothered to watch Hannibal, he would have seen the vivid frustration in his features.

The sketches were incredibly detailed and precise. Will's wounds, the shape of the car's trunk, the silhouette of the man and the garage were all recounted. Some elements almost looked like pictures. So much so that Will couldn't repress a violent shudder at the sight of the face's sketch.

Hannibal had kept pressing Will for details, pushing him out, alone in the confines of his repressed memories. Things he hadn't know to see, others he had tried to forget, all of them where now innocently laying gray on blank in front of his eyes.

"What do we do now? Splash them with water until they get blurry?"

"No, you rest" the Doctor said, mouth pouty and eyes shining.

Will looked at him slightly bewildered.

To have made him remember it all and then to sent him back home!

"I fail to see the pertinence of the exercise" he said, fists balling in frustration.

Nodding, Doctor Lecter got up, he explained that a break now was best.

"You see Will right now you're high on adrenaline. I want you to deprive your body from relief. To frustrate it."

Will followed the man with his eyes, unsure of where his newly found trust for the psychiatrist stopped and started.

"Your body craves an immediate answer. We are not going to give it to it and nothing is going to happen. You are safe. Your inaction won't bring anything negative to your well being. Then you are going to come back tomorrow, rested, and look at these again. Only then will I allow you to destroy them."

Chapter End Notes

Hannibal may or may not masturbate to these pictures...

Alana Sandwich

Chapter Notes

> Constructive criticism is welcome. You don't have to like the story or the chapter (even better if you don't actually, tell me what needs improving!)

The piece was finished but Will hadn't payed any attention to it. At first he had been enraptured by the fleeting of Hannibal's fingers over the boards. Their speed, deftness, plunging him in a vibrating trans, until Alana gasped and he found himself stolen to the twitches of her lips as she smiled and purred at the man demonstrating his talent to them.

She wasn't wearing any lipstick today. The true color of her lips was showing then, they laid naked for Will to drink, indecent and erotic to his heart. They were lilac colored.

A very soft and young lilac blossom.

Alana giggled at a particularly fast sequence executed with maestro and Will eyes flickered up to the crinkle of her blues. She was wearing eyeliner to strike the shape of her lids but also soft shades of azure and greys.

Usually she didn't wear as much eye make-up. He smiled to himself, guessing she hadn't put lipstick, as to not go over the top. Nonetheless he imagined her in front of the mirror, hesitating on applying it. Knowing her, she had probably taken it off, put it back on and then decided against it.

Snow white come true. Except smarter, livelier...a woman. The slapping of her hands trapping the wind against her palms stole him away from her. He clapped too, although he barely remembered the sounds made in the background. Hannibal looked pleased and smiled at Alana who blushed.

It went unbeknownst to Will who now found himself studying Hannibal's proud posture. His hands were rested on his knees and his chin lifted high. The spine was very straight and his feet planted firmly on the ground.

Will jumped as he felt a smack of lips on his cheek. Her perfume enveloped him for a blissful millisecond before she withdrew. "That was lovely Hannibal" she supplied enthusiastically. "Unfortunately I need to go if I don't want to be late." She got up, straightening her skirt and waved at Will who answered back.

"I'll show you to the door" the tall man offered, laying his square hand on the small of her back.

The gesture went unnoticed by Will. Instead he was staring at the harpsichord, wondering at its strangeness. One day a man had given his genius to sound. How such a creation had come to a human mind bewildered him. Boats were functional. Harpsichords were harpsichords. Not that interesting.

Doctor Lecter hadn't come back. He wondered if he was supposed to leave with Alana. Maybe he was over-welcoming his stay. Huffing he got up. He was being silly.

Smiling he got to the kitchen and found two glasses.

When Hannibal came back, tall austere and serious he was greeted with a smiling crown of brown curls. He took the glass from Will's hand and couldn't help return the smile he was offered.

"Tell me Doctor, why do you compose?" Will asked, circling the man.

Hannibal chuckled, knowing Will was grossly mimicking a psychiatrist psychoanalyzing.

"I have a lot to express." he answered following Will's little dance with his eyes.

"Mhm, a brain as fertile as yours does beg to create. But for whom, what is your muse, your performance isn't intellectual. Where do these emotions come from?"

"I discover them as I lay them out. It's a way of knowing myself as much as it is a way of expressing myself." He was still standing stiffly in the middle of Will's circle when said man dropped in his armchair and looked at him with a tired smile.

"You really do not indulge in the arts William, do you?"

"I guess not" he answered the curtains.

"I had eczema when I was a child" Hannibal admitted. Will quirked an eyebrow, showing him he was still listening. His traits were relaxed and anxious at the same time, his boy was mulling something over.

"Our physician advised I should express myself more. As eczema is a condition which feeds off stress and kept feelings. The day I took the crayon, all of my patches disappeared."

"Remarkable." Will nodded.

"And lucky." Hannibal agreed. He paused for a second searching for the right way to formulate his next sentence. Will was distracted, chewing on the inside of his cheek but still smiling. He looked happy.

"I think you should know, Alana's kissed me." he pinched. Will's smile died away as soon as he understood the meaning of those words.

"Don't lie" he said stone cold. Hannibal's eyes filled with a look akin to pity, making Will nauseous. He wasn't pathetic damn it. "I'm afraid it's true Will. I'm sorry, if I had known you still harvested interest for her I wouldn't have let hings develop this way."

Will stood up from his armchair, glass of wine abandoned on the coffee table. He had the look of a bitter defeated man.

How could old, broken Will compete against rich, stable successful Hannibal? He whispered to himself, and than louder "I should have know better."

"I understand if..." his mouth closed at Will's open hand.

Getting back to his seat the man took back the glass of wine and tasted its tartness with the tip of his lips.

"It barely matters Hannibal. Alana is a good friend and so are you."

The contrast Will offered was interesting. The genuine quality of his features had receded, hidden under a thick blanket of distance. The pack wolf had stepped away for the lone wolf..

"So, I was wondering if you would let me check on your harpsichord." he asked face neutral.

"Ah, so yo noticed to that some of the higher notes were slightly off? Nothing I can't take care of myself I assure."

Will gulped down his glass of wine and got up set it back rather noisily on the table. "Oh no, I didn't really pay attention to you play, I just wanted to understand how it worked."

Hannibal's eyes flickered to Will's frame. The man was turned away, unaware.

The Doctor's voice didn't betray him when he replied: "if it amuses you."

Will turned around then, raking Hannibal’s body top to bottom. "It does" he simply said, marching towards the music instrument.

There was something there in his tone that irritated the Doctor. Not for the first time he considered Will rude. Hinting that their conversation was boring him and leaving his presence to toy with his possessions, all the while speaking to him as if he was an ant!

There was a need to slash and spill that swelled his veins, making his limbs feel limp and stretched. It was better for him to clean up behind them and let Will on his own for a while.

None of them were good company in this instant.

Offbeat

Chapter Notes

Trigger warning for verbal sexual assault

The tall familiar architecture of the building stood in front of him as he got out of his car. Case in hand he walked towards the entry without paying too much attention to his surroundings. He couldn't help but notice from the corner of his eyes the heads that were turning to his wake. He payed them no mind. He was used to it.

Jack wanted to talk to him. To exchange ideas. He had to feel flattered to have gathered the respect of such a man. Sometimes it made him revisit his career choice.

He was relieved he could talk freely now. To be listened. To be a partaker instead of a spectator. There was a part of him, he only realized it now, that hadn't accepted to rely on others to protect himself.

He was his. This was personal.

"Hello Will." The tall man greeted him from his desk.

"Hello Jack."

They had quickly taken to first names. Yelling on someone did that. It brought you closer.

"I have good news for you."

"Good?"

"Very" Jack intoned as he reached in front of him for a folder.

"I asked Doctor Bloom and Chilton to read the profile you established for your assaulter. Both added and corrected a few elements. We ran some things up with the computer. I think we might have other victims."

"Like me?" he whispered as Jack handed him the case.

"Yes. The lab geeks already gave him a name."

Will lifted his eyes in an interrogation. Jack made a face, indicating his partiality to it.

"The Supermarket Killer." he delivered.

Will felt obliged to chuckle at the grotesque of the name.

"He went shopping and found himself a little Will to put in his cart." he commented. "A Brenda, and a Steve..." he murmured as he overlooked the sheets of paper in the case.

"We're not sure of anything yet." Jack reminded. "But it's a start. The first one since we have started this case." he added.

"I want to catch him Jack. I want to be a part of this."

"What does it look like you're doing?" Jack answered, smiling.

"I want to be there when you arrest him." he specified, staring at Jack with as much confidence as he could.

The black man left the desk to pat him on the shoulder. "You won't be stranded in the dark anymore Will. We'll make sure of that."

When Will got out Crawford's office, an hour had past. His pace was tense and stiff through the long gray corridor. There was a trepidation at the possibility of finding that man who had humiliated him. But it was all the more real now that he had a name and other victims. It was a realism he didn't enjoy. And there was the photographs of these missing persons. All that blood. And the dead-eyes. Will had never seen dead eyes before.

Will felt like talking to Doctor Lecter. The only person he could talk to about his dark thoughts without garnishing pity or worry. It seemed Doctor Lecter was familiar with this abyss.

But he had kissed Alana Bloom.

And they had parted on poor terms.

"You're the one that talked to Lounds?"

The question came from an Asian woman wearing light make-up and fake leather boots.

If the approach was direct, he had to appreciate the fact that she hadn't said "victim", because that was the sum up.

"Don't look so defensive" she grinned. "It was a good read. I'm genuinely impressed you managed to make him listen to you."

She continued to look him up, stopping longer at his face. There was a crinkle of sympathy at the corner of her mouth. Before she finally stepped aside.

When their eyes met as he passed by she grabbed his hand.

"Nice to meet you Mr. Graham, I'm Bev. Don't be afraid to share your theories with us, the lab techs. I'll back you up if they make sense."

He bothered to properly look back at her. Her head was tilted forward, her eyes dead still.

"I won't."

"Good." she said, letting go of his hand.

Will raised his a head as he got sight of Dr. Bloom's wavy hair.

Beverly turned around to see what had got his attention. She saw a fresh woman in a nice skirt, bearing a sweat smile. But something was off on Graham's side. She looked at her, then at him. Then at her again.

"I wanted to surprise you" she said smiling.

Will returned the smile, but to Beverly, it was obviously contrite.

"I don't need you. To do that." Will knew how petty he was being right now but couldn't help it. It hurt.

"I wanted to spend some time with you before mid-term period" she laughed. "Besides, I need you to help me choose some wine." she said, looping her arm around his.

Beverly watched the exchange and cringed. Time to go, she thought.

"Are you a lab technicians?" the small woman asked her, turning around. "Do you think Will's angle is probable?"

"Yeah, sure." she replied, wanting to shorten the conversation. "He had quite the arguments. But we'll have to see with the old reports and the bodies."

Will wasn't interested by Beverly's response. Too focused on the idea that the only reason Alana would be wanting some advice on wine was because she had been invited somewhere.

"I don't trust him." Will muttered and Alana pinched her lips.

Beverly didn't understand.

"He told you, didn't he?"

"Don't be coarse Alana."

Beverly raised both of her eyebrows, expression illustrating "shit hit the fan."

Alana rolled her eyes, angry for the guilt he made her feel. "I'm allowed to have a life outside of you Will Graham. We broke up years ago. I think you need to understand that."

She bit her lips, anxious as she looked back at Will who's stare was blank.

"I know something's wrong with the man."

He unlooped his arm and waived to both women.

"I'm heading home. Ask Hannibal himself. Have a good day Bev."

Beverly and Alana exchanged a look.

The lab tech felt as if she had to defend him somehow. So she caught the Doctor's attention and advised: "Take care. He's still scared."

And with that she left, disheveled but amused at the small drama she had witnessed.

Alana sighed and sped to catch up with William.

His stride was gaunt. He seemed taller to her. Even taller than Hannibal.

There was no apple greeting him when he stepped up to his door in the dark. But there was a thick brown envelop on the other side.

He ripped it open and pictures fell. Him, fishing, getting gas. With Jack, at Hannibal's door..."penis", "cum bucket" and obscene words were written all over them. He trembled and though of what Hannibal had told him. That fear was useless if it wasn't meant to prevent him. He didn't feel in immediate danger. He was on some sort of trial.

For how long was the question.

I'm feeling a bit alone and I'm not feeling well

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will had gone to the Supermarket again. He had fantazied about grabbing that woman parked next to him. It would have been so easy, just like that, just like him. Open the door, grab, pull in, knock out and ride.

The woman froze when she noticed his stare and he felt sick to his stomach.

It probably was because he had looked at the pictures too much.

Don't focus too much on them. Jack had said. *We're not expecting anything from you.*

How could he not?

There were images that kept jumping at him. They didn't belong to him. The pain and the blood and these dead eyes seemed to be carved behind his eyelids now. The more he understood him, the less he understood himself.

He had poured hours on the pictures. Staring at the victims, trying to find something else, a signature behind the otherwise copied modus operandi of the killer. For the fourth time today he reached to call Hannibal. Instead he called Alana.

"Tea? At my place?"

Alana agreed easily. She wanted to patch them up. She always wanted to do the right thing. He just needed to feel human again.

Will remembered the first time they had come together. It had been so easy. Alana was predictable. Good to read. Reassuring. They had been nice, normal, sweet together. He imagined her lips taking Hannibal's. Her small frame disappearing in his tall embrace. Their forehead pressing against one another as they stared at each others eyes. He shivered. How obvious was it, all the things he couldn't offer? How poor he was in his offerings?

The kettle was steaming by the time he heard her tires creaking on the soil. The herd broke into excited barks immediately. They pressed at the door and clawed at it. Some of them had known her for over six years.

He watched her stalk towards them on the porch. Puffing cold hair by his nostrils. He was pushed from behind by Jack and Buster, Zoe skipped a step or two and they all landed at Alana's feet. This was cringy when he thought about it. *This household is too Alana driven.*

Alana laughed her awkward laugh. She still felt guilty about last time.

"I have a monarchist this semester" he blurt out.

"Oh? Feeling swayed Mister Graham?"

"With that french heritage? Never."

He opened the door for her watched the dogs trampling her to rush in first.

They talked about their students. Like in the old times And then she saw the case files Jack had given him.

"How are you nightmares Will?"

He rolled his eyes and shifted in his armchair. "Plenty-full and vivid."

Alana straightened. "You think this is smart? There's a reason why I rarely consult."

Will looked back at the files. "I'll dream anyway."

"It gets worse Will, trust me. Profiling wears someone out. You can't come back from this place once you've stepped in it."

"But you're fine?"

"I'm not that good." she admitted. "I look enough."

"And you rarely take a dip."

Alana closed her eyes. She looked at her cup and then back at Will. "Maybe I should stop following the case. I shouldn't. Not knowing you were part of it. I want to help but not like that. You're my friend. This is too personal."

"Don't worry. He's going to get what he deserves."

The tone was dark. Deep and sure. Alana frowned. "What do you mean Will." she said gently.

"I'm saying, that if he comes here again, I won't call Jack and I'll have some fun of my own."

The smile he made made her jump up right. She turned away. "Don't jock about this."

"I'm not" he said, following her. "I have nice tools in my shed."

"If you think like that you're the one that aught to finish in prison." she said appalled.

The silence that followed was too long.

"Talk to me Will". Alana said, rubbing her arm. "I'm sorry I said that" she pleaded.

"You meant it."

"Those are bad thoughts William!" she protested. "When a friend of mine tells me they're having morbid dreams it's normal to worry."

"So is to tell them they should go to a mental institute?"

"You aren't the same" she murmured in the wake of his anger.

"To imply I'm not strong enough to withstand what happened to me..." he snarled, pacing.

"You've always been impressionable Will. I know how sensitive you are." she tried.

"I'm a good man" he shout back at her.

"A good man doesn't fantazise of torturing people!"

There were tears in her eyes. He could see it. All. The lack of trust. The lack of affection.

All he had wanted from her was a hug. A pet on the head.

I know you're a good person William, was what Alana had been supposed to say. Not to reject him. Not to push him.

What had he been thinking going to her. Talking to her about that.

"Will anybody who suffered from that sort of trauma takes years to get better. You obviously need assistance. You cannot do this on your own."

She followed him as he moved to the kitchen to make himself some coffee.

"I've been patient." she pressed.

The dogs were eearly silent.

"Will, are you listening to me?"

He shrugged as he poured the warm water in the machine.

"You should be terrified. Instead you seem...normal."

"Can't you accept I'm doing well?" he whipped back.

Alana retracted her hand. Trembling slightly.

"Some victims get emotionally numb. You need to see a psychiatrist. You need help."

"Because I'm not scared anymore?"

"Because you're changing!" she moaned.

He rolled his eyes at her antics.

She put her hands in front of her mouth. "I don't recognize you."

Will turned around again. Busying his hands desperately.

Alana squeezed her eyes shut and forced herself to hug him from behind.

She shivered at the contact but stayed glued to his warm back. The one she had kissed so many times in her teenage years.

"Violence isn't the answer" she whispered in his t-shirt.

Will didn't move. Subdued by her soft body pressed against his.

"Becoming a monster wont' rid you of your fears." she begged.

The erection he was trying to hide died at her words.

A monster.

The word rang so loud he started to cry.

That's what people thought he was? Was that what he was becoming?

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading!

Article Effect

Chapter Notes

Pace will hopefully be a bit better, we're nearing the end!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

He knew he was growing dependent but he hadn't been able to decline when Hannibal had invited him to accompany him to the store.

He had dropped by to give back a book he had borrowed. Trying to get ride it as if it could help him get rid of the man himself.

But Hannibal had his coat on when he had answered the door. He was surprised to see Will and the latter had taken it as his cue to leave.

But Hannibal had called for him.

"No, I never had a pet." he answered him.

"It's too much responsibility. You long for freedom." Will said, eyes cast forwards, eyebrows knitted.

"Yes." Hannibal, answered, crossing his arms behind his back. "I long for it where you long for responsibility." after a pause he added: "Are you scared of your own freedom Will?"

The question came unexpected on his part. That was a theory that he hadn't considered. However, something in its echoes didn't reverberate wrongly. He slowed his pace, absorbed in the answer he searched before finally admitting: "I guess you could say, I'm scared of getting to know myself too intimately."

"Funny when it's something I so deeply yearn for." he murmured.

Will didn't remark on the confession. Too bothered by what he had said out loud. He was showing too much of himself again.

"Jack called me after Freddie's article came out." Will started, desperate to find another conversation. Hannibal acknowledged the man attempt to flee his psychological digging.

"He must have been out of his mind. Imagine, a man relaying so much on control.." he commented, absentmindedly. There was a group of girls walking in front of them, taking all the space on the side walk and preventing them from walking faster.

Will let out half a sigh, half a chuckle. "He ripped my head off." he remembered, smiling.

"You seem unperturbed by it" Hannibal said, suddenly serious. He edged closer to Will, frowning slightly at the man's relaxed shoulders.

"He..we talked." Will admitted, ruffling his curls.

Hannibal waited for him to continue, the frown deepening before disappearing from his smooth forehead.

Will had started snapping and folding his fingers, like he used to when he talked about unsavory subjects. Than came the right hand sliding down his rough cheek.

"You talked." Hannibal reminded him, showing an unusual lack of patience.

Will looked back at him, noting some intensity in the sardonyx of his eyes. Pinching his lips, Hannibal took a step back, giving Will a bit more physical space.

"We're here." Hannibal cut.

Both men faced a small, low roofed shop. It was unassuming, maybe modest from the exterior. Stepping first, Will opened the door, which activated the small bell from the inside. The small ring didn't bring anyone forward. He held the door for Hannibal without looking at him. He was admiring the seemingly disorganized display of liquor and bottles. They were stacked on and in wooden boxes piled on top of each other. Aligned against the wall in blinks of reds and greens.

He heard Hannibal inhale deeply behind him, taking in the smell of dust, limestone and mold. "This is one of Baltimore’s small treasures" he smiled, deeply content with himself. "I discovered this shop by pure luck", he rambled, rooming the labels, occasionally coming closer to the bottles to get a better look. "I was trying to hide from the rain and this was my reward."

Will watched him with a certain pleasure and unease. Being with Hannibal could be oddly natural at times. He spotted the small door at the far right of the shop and stared at it, expecting the owner to come out anytime soon.

He diverted his gaze when he heard a small exclamation coming from his partner. Hannibal's smile was wide as he held a bottle of red up to his chest. He excused himself past Will and put it on the check out counter. Then, the psychiatrist went around it and helped himself to a tall transparent liquor.

"Mirabelle plum brandy" he murmured somewhat lovingly. "Never had any" Will commented.

"Delicious on its own or to cook poultry." he informed, coming back towards him and adding it to the red.

Suddenly a banged echoed in the room and Will startled as he observed a man emerge from the floor boards. Hannibal looked unperturbed, probably being used to it, and nodded distinctly at the old scarce bearded man.

"Ah, Lecter!" the man exclaimed, pushing back his glasses on his nose. "What'd you take?" Will squinted at the heavy accent, he assumed it to be french.

Pushing Will aside with a gentle hand, Hannibal presented the bottles he had selected.

"Eh, too good to leave right? They'd better not die soon!" he smirked, disappearing back from where he came from.

"This brandy is directly imported from France. It's made by his grand-parents." the doctor explained to a curious Will. He nodded, more and more interested by the small universe that he had walked into.

"Same recipe that they sold to the Germans during WWII!" the owner added, jumping back up. He closed the latch and walked towards the counter.

"Canard, taureau et sanglier, on the house for you and your friend to delight in!" he proudly said, presenting them with long hard sausages.

"Many thanks" Hannibal replied as the man prepared the bag.

"I trust you to eat them with this Porto" he replied. "And I trust you to come back on your own" he said, pointing his finger at Will's dazed face.

"A la revoyure!" he said amicably after Hannibal had handed him the bills.

"A la revoyure!" he replied.

Will would have lied if he denied to enjoy the way the words came out of the psychiatrist's mouth. He waved and left the door open for Hannibal once again, marveling at the radiant expression on Hannibal's face.

"A way to a man's heart is indeed his stomach" he joked.

The corner of Hannibal's eyes crinkled. He walked of with his bag of groceries inviting Will to fasten his pace. "I was about to invite you for an apéritif". It was said casually but Will had to feel a rush in his chest. When he looked over at Hannibal, he saw that his smile had disappeared. He was looking serious again, and he didn't know what to make of it.

"Lets walk a bit faster, I want to taste this at the first dark hour of the day." the Li thuanian said, quickening his pace.

Inside, Hannibal waited after he had served Will a healthy amount of wine before asking him again about his discussion with Jack Crawford.

Will took a bite in the saucisson Hannibal had sliced for them. They were jumbled in tray made out of clay.

"He yelled a lot. Talked about obstruction of justice, said I was out of line. That he was the professional and I should stay were I belonged." Still chewing, he added "it was a relief, cathartic. For both of us I think. I mean we always had to stay polite with each other. Especially him. I'm the victim." there was a strain on the last word but he pursued casually: "In the end it convinced him. You can't ignore what's laying in front of you."

"Implying?"

"..Implying that I met up with Jack, and he agreed to discuss my theories. And I might have been granted access to the Ripper files."

Hannibal raised an eyebrow, "Have you? How did you find them?"

"The killings? Overbearing, slightly pretentious.."

Hannibal pinched his lips. "Now that you are considering two men instead of one, do you have any leads on your killer?"

Raising an eyebrow Will huffed. "He hides behind other kills..they're studying cases that have more or less the same patterns. It might take some time." He took a swig of wine and gulped a couple of slices before admitting that Crawford had asked him to supervise the end result. "He even said he'd like me to take a closer look at the Ripper's"

"Maybe I could help?"

"No, certainly not. I'm not dragging you into my world."

"Will, we're friends. I can't dream of leaving you on your own in this adventure."

“Adventure? We're talking about the man that sequestrated me, tried to shove a dildo up my ass and kill me with it."

Setting his glass on the nearest furniture, Hannibal retracted: "I'm sorry Will. The term I used was pedestrian. You hadn't told me about that part..."

"Well he didn't do it. Nothing happened. As soon as the clock struck seven he told me he needed to get dressed for work and left. I escaped. Case closed." he spat, tongue feeling thick.

"It's of utmost importance Will. Never would the Ripper get inclined into something as..dirty. We need to establish a difference between..."

"I don't give a damn about the Ripper, I want to catch *him*!" he cut. If he noticed Hannibal flinch, he didn't pay it any mind. Coolly, he continued: "I know the differences between him and the Ripper. I talked it out with Jack. You don't need to know everything Hannibal." he said dropping his gaze.

"I didn't think my offer for help would have been seen as offensive." the doctor answered, voice clipped.

It was perhaps the first time Will was able to witness the great Doctor Lecter losing a morsel of his temper. He was vexed, in his own home non the least.

"I think it's time for me to go." Will murmured, giving back the wine glass to Hannibal.

"I think it is." he heard the other reply. It would have been funny to note that the psychiatrist could pout, if it weren't for the the deadly coldness of his tone. Will hoped he hadn't ruined something.

Doctor Lecter followed him to the entrance, as per etiquette required him to. He curtly opened the door for Will.

Before disappearing outside he thanked him nonetheless for his hospitality. He only received a brief nod but it was still something.

Chapter End Notes

*"Duck, bull and boar" saucisson, best dry (probably the only meat vegetarians still long for)
*Literally "until the next time we see each other", familiar and slightly old fashioned nowadays

Some Seduction?

Chapter Notes

*The meal was inspired by the book of recipes: Le savoir-vivre du chocolat, by B. Vie Marcadé as well as the wine-chocolate-cigar association.

Hannibal fisted his cock as he remembered the sight of Will's tense body pressed against the armchair as he vexed himself so unexpectedly.

He stopped soon enough. Frustrated at himself for having a thought he hadn't predicted.

Then he started over again.

Yes, he was also delighted of the new array of sensations Will Graham had provided him with. He decided then to be more adventurous. Hannibal summoned his memory, made himself taste William's sweat over his tongue. There was the memory of his body too. The frame, the flesh, the muscles. His strong body odor. So sweet and acid, almost acrid in a masculine and miserable way. Wild. The suggestions of his mind slowly persuaded his body of the other man's presence in the room. Hannibal imagined Will's body naked. Vulnerable.

He closed his eyes tighter as he pulsed. He combed his pubic hair, pausing the attention to his penis, not wanting to lose the sensations so soon.

He was curious, he had to push the fantasy a bit further, had to analyze just how far he could go with this. He saw himself spraying Will in gold and fucking him there, on the entrails of their common foe. He enjoyed the sensation it procured in his sack and tested bringing Alana in the picture. Imagined her soft breast pressed against his own skin, the wetness of her vulva as she opened herself to his fingers. Imagined Will taking her from behind as he took care of her front.

There was something wrong, as when he summoned the lines of her regular face in his imagination, soon the image was insistently replaced by Will's.

Fragile, multiple Will Graham.

An fan of possibilities. A tableau so rich, it would take him years to spot every detail.

Where most people were portraits, Will was a landscape. As rich as *La voragine infernale* de Boticelli.

Hannibal choose to ignore the fact that he had just compared Will to a representation of Hell.

What was Hell but the harbor of frustrated desires and unnameable fears?

Hannibal came to the idea of Will discovering the man behind the Chesapeake Ripper, rained at the fear and pain he read on his friend's face, the pain he would feel at the utter betrayal. Hannibal shook and pressed the tip of his cockhead to feel the last of his drops seep out.

Momentarily closing his eyes, he swiped the tip and gathered white drops on his finger pads. He allowed himself the fantasy that it was Will's and not his semen, as he put them in his mouth and sucked.

Dr. Lecter started at the ceiling for a while, listening to the white noise, cleaning himself of the impressions that had imprinted so quickly in his mind.

Exhaling loudly, Dr. Lecter got up. He was animated by an intense energy. The persistent sensation that a humming-bird was trapped in the cage of his bones, drumming on his ribs.

What was he to do with it?

How was he going to understand these knew sentiments?

He wanted to kill for Will, show him his nature, his power, share his art and finally find kinship in the intimacy of his hands.

What was to be done?

*

Will had come to his door with a bag of truffles he had picked from the market where they had engaged in their second conversation.

Where Will had started to lower his walls.

He took the bag from Will's sheepish hands, none too proud to hide the glee he experienced at the man coming back to him, even after a fight over a woman. Even after a fight over him.

That's how important our friendship is- no, how important I am- to him.

When Will felt Hannibal's strong hand clasp his shoulder, it released a tension he had carried all day.

He smiled, open and honest at the taller man, and forced his hand back down as it strained to reciprocate the touch.

Both men found themselves in front of the lit fire place. Enjoying the strong smell of fire and the dime light of the evening together.

The reflection of the orange flames danced on their faces as they glanced at each other, reveling in details of their lines the darkness tried to deny.

Will found himself very much absorbed in Hannibal's features.

They were enjoying dessert alongside a cigar and alcohol. Hannibal, who described himself as a none smoker, insisted that all three were meant to be enjoyed together. Or lose the potential of their taste if they failed to observe the rule*.

"If I am the marbled tart and you are the wine, who is the cigar?"

Hannibal poured the alcohol.

He answered Will once the bottle had been put away.

"You are the cigar Will." he said, slowly drawing a puff he released through his barely opened mouth.

Will raised an eyebrow. "Who's the tart?"

"Wrong question again William." he answered, an amused lilt in his voice.

Hannibal passed the cigar on and watched Will's lips pucker around as he let the smoke out of his nose.

"What is?" he correct himself, wary of the man's mischievous look. He rubbed his eyelids, rocked by the shadows cast by the fire light and the warmth of the room.

Hannibal half-closed eyes ran over his face, "Our synergy..."

"I beg your pardon?" he said, slightly annoyed at the use of a technical term so late in the evening.

Hannibal padded his lips with a napkin to hide his smile. He took his time swallowing the portion before answering.

"From Greek, *sunergia:* cooperation. The fruits of our partnership. Greater than the ones produced by our individual labors combined."

"Ah, like the Myth of the Androgyne, what is wrong with you lately Hannibal? You seem awfully taken by Plato's banquet." he snickered around a generous mouthful.

It earned him an actual laugh from the psychiatrist. Slowly, he bent towards a very immobile Will and prided away a crumb that had found its way on the corner of his lip. Hannibal's nail nicked his skin, waking his nervous system convincingly. "On the contrary Will, I think you are the one absorbed with Eros..."

Will found it hard to gulp down the remains of the dessert as he observed Hannibal's hand retracting towards its owner's body.

"Synergy is a term used in economics. I was pointing towards our productivity."

Will's body had the decency not to blush, amidst all the alcohol it had already ingested.

Hannibal inspected the tiny beige crumb between his fingers. He turned towards Will, slowly then pushed a single finger passed the opening of his lips, sucking it in.

The cigar was finished. The alcohol absorbed. The tart ravished.

They leaned closer to each other. Hannibal was caressing Will's forearm and neither men were realizing it.

"You are still upset with Alana. But not because she kissed me."

"You kissed her." he corrected.

Hannibal didn't stop feeling up his arm.

"Yet here you are." he said softly.

Wills stayed resolutely silent. His jaw flexed before he turned towards Hannibal. Hannibal leaned in.

"I'm better for your ego." he offered.

Will laughed through his nose. "She makes me feel...wrong."

"She reproaches you your darkness."

Will couldn't deny I was his anymore.

"I would never brutalize you into a shape you do not belong to."

"Thanks. That's a nice way to say you think I'm violent." he said, almost taking back his arm.

Hannibal sensed the shift and seized his hand. He held it to his burgendy lips and brushed them against the surface of his knucles.

"Do not obstrue the freedom in violence." Hannibal murmured.

"You want me to be free?" Will croaked.

"I want you to be. Authentic."

Will dropped his head back and closed his eyes.

First Kiss

Chapter Notes

I don't see Will as someone very orally expressive or big on love declarations.

"I heard from Alana there was a break on the case. You were right. The Chesapeake Ripper had an imitator. They found three more victims belonging to the Supermarket killer. It also seems Jack wants you to watch other victim's files. To see if you could attribute them. You said the Ripper's personality and the number of kills he made didn't match."

Will shrugged the comment off, as well as the mention of Alana's name coming from Hannibal's mouth.

"I told you Hannibal. I don't want to talk about it with you. I talk about it with Jack. It's enough."

"The reason why you talk about it is because you want to catch this killer Will. The more minds are up to it, the faster we'll get there."

He hugged himself and turned away when Hannibal searched his face. It was easy to see he was anxious.

"You don't understand Hannibal..everything is about him. Not even my nights belong to me anymore." the grip of his hand grew stronger on his arms, crinkling his shirt. "Being with you is...like a reprieve. I'd appreciate it to keep it that way."

"You wish to keep me away from the shadows. Use me as a safe place."

"It sounds reductive when said like that Hannibal, you're not just..." Will didn't finish his sentence. He sighed, contrite and frustrated by the turn of this conversation. It was far too early. The bud was still too green. He slid his hand across his face before turning back towards Hannibal.

The man was intrigued. A very curious stare met Will's guilty look. Hannibal felt a light buzz at the surface of his skin. Oh, how he was seized by the urge to smile. Will was showing a development he hadn't expected.

Doctor Lecter reclined over his desk, letting the arch of his spine rest against the solid wood. He tilted his head lightly in the hopes of appearing non-threatening and waited..

Will was aware of the present shift in the air. He watched Doctor Lecter in disbelief. The man was still silent, and Will thought him almost anticipative.

What was he to do, excuse himself, divert, deny? Doctor Lecter was a gentleman, he would never comment on the incident. But he was far from stupid. Wouldn't believe a denial. God he was acting like Alana...

He closed the distance between them and cupped the Doctor's face. "You're not just a friend. Or a safe place..." he said, leaning in.

Will kissed Hannibal tenderly. Lips moist enough to adhere to his dry ones, gently coaxing them into a gentle dance. There was no tongue, no physical contact either but for a hand respectfully caressing his elbow.

Will felt unreal. This kiss felt like something he had long waited for despite his own ignorance of it. It was sweet, addictive, stirring a need of affection he hadn't known to possess. Hannibal felt good. Hannibal smelled good. He was safe for his mind.

When Hannibal interrupted the kiss, Will fluttered his eyelids several times, as if searching to confirm his sight. Hannibal's lips where red, his eyes dark and shiny. Focused like a predator.

He left out a giddy laugh unwillingly, slightly overwhelmed by the development of their relationship. "Wow" he managed, as he finally recovered a few brain cells.

Hannibal smiled, reaching to push back his curls, "indeed", he agreed.

They looked at each other in an awkward silence. Not yet used to the new dynamic. Then Will decided to enjoy the moment, pushing away warning thoughts and worries he pressed against Hannibal and raised his chin to meet his lips again. Surprised, the man grabbed him by the shoulders, only to press him more firmly against him.

When they parted both their brains had decided to reevaluate their bold distribution.

Hannibal and Will working on the Supermarket Killer

Chapter Notes

Thanks for all of the kudos guys!

Alana walked on the sidewalk clacking her heels on the ground, leaving ostentatious sounds behind her. It was dark outside already, the days had shortened.

She picked up her pace, hoping Hannibal would still be at his office, after all, it was late. Will was hiding things from her, she was sure. She needed a second opinion in order to determine the right course of action to adopt. She was worried about him. He was drawing away from her, stepping further into a darkness she feared he wouldn't return from.

Alana knocked heavily on the door and waited, closing her coat tighter around herself.

The night air bit her cheeks and she trembled lightly at the drop of temperature she had failed to anticipate.

"Hi, Hannibal. Sorry to intrude on your personal time like this. I'm here about Will." she muttered.

Hannibal smiled and opened the door wider.

"Not at all, Will is right here. I'll get you some whiskey, maybe you can help us."

"Help you?" she said, voice quacking.

She found Will on Hannibal's floor, surrounded with papers, maps and a glass of liquor.

She hadn't seen him since their fight.

"Will?"

Will raised his head and found Alana's pretty face greeting his eyes.

She knelt down to pick one of them up, curious as to what these two had been up to. Will smiled softly at her but withdrew his smile soon enough when he saw the worry that crept on her face as she saw what he had been reading.

She was not pleased to see FBI files with unsolved murders and recently classified cases labeled "potential Supermarket Killer victims."

Her eyes scanned the checklist, going from copied modus operandi to sexual crimes.

"The Supermarket Killer will need to kill again. The fact that he messed me won't deter him. He needs to kill again, soon. It's an impulse, it's not controlled. He's frustrated and needs release. Jack wants my theories on this." Will tried to say casually.

His attempts of pacifying her failed entirely, as the storm appeared in her eyes.

"Hannibal is helping you? You're letting him do this Hannibal?"

She searched for the man with her gaze, stopping on his returning figure.

Hannibal calmly strode towards her and handed the freshly poured class in her hand.

"Alana, Will is no fragile teacup. Besides, he's perfectly capable of deciding for himself"

She shot him a betrayed look that he ignored, favoring a glance in Will's direction.

Patting her shoulder he assured: "I believe we can truly help Jack. William has a real knack for the killers."

Alana shooed his hand away, refusing the placating gesture. She shot him a dark look and pulled on her coat.

"I don't think you understand what you are doing to Will. I work for Jack, I know how he is. If...he'll want you to examine other murders too if you succeed, it will never end."

"I know how to say no" Will scoffed.

"Alana is scared you won't want to" Hannibal remarked.

She watched both men exchange a knowing gaze and felt utterly lost.

"Don't you get it?"

How was her sweet, goofy Will ever going to return from...that? The day this man had kidnapped him, he had ripped her from her best friend.

She felt an uncontrollable anger seizing her loins, growing in her spine until she was shaking. This Supermarket Killer, this Chesapeake Ripper. They were going to rape his fragile mind, sully it. And she was going to lose him.

"Alana" Will called.

She stepped away from him as he got up to reach out for her.

Alana shook her dark curls. "I don't want you to get you hurt Will" she murmured. "I don't."

She realized she had tears brimming at her eyes and was quick to wipe them away.

"I don't think I can be off any assistance tonight."

She took another step back and added: "I wish you didn't do this. There's a whole department working for you. You don't need to go in there. You don't need to look."

Will followed her.

It was easy to fall in his arms. She closed her eyes, indulging in the feeling of his existence. The material of his shirt was familiar on her skin. His smell was old and natural to her. Alana held him tight. She couldn't help leaving a small kiss on his neck.

Will brought her closer to his body and dug his nose into her lush curls.

"I won't get lost Alana. I won't be sucked in. You don't need to worry for me. I'm a fisherman remember. I know how lures work."

She squeezed him again. "I love you Willy" she said in a shaky exhale.

"I love you too Lanny"

As they separated she brushed her hair off of her face, trying to make it seem as if she hadn't broken down right here, in front of him and Hannibal.

She nodded in the older man's direction, sheepish and embarrassed.

"Good night boys, take care" she said softly before disappearing in the hallway.

Only when they heard the sound of Hannibal's door close did they turn to face each other.

The room was still lightly tense so they remained silent. At least until they felt like enough time had past for them to be released.

"It must be nice to know you are cared for." Hannibal said casually, coaxing them back into their amicable dynamic.

Will plopped back down next to his glass.

He lent back and acquiesced. He sighed and then admitted:

"Maybe I am enjoying this too much. I feel...I don't feel good. I'm still uneasy but it feels..."

"Like you are in control?" Hannibal supplied, sitting next to Will.

"Yeah. I don't like delegating. My problems are mine."

"Mhm, independent spirit"

The comment was more meant to himself than to be said out loud and Hannibal had the decency to take colors on his cheeks.

Will looked at him surprised and laughed.

"That's what it takes to attract the great Hannibal Lecter. He doesn't like sheep does he?" he teased, mouth wide and teeth shining in the light.

Hannibal grinned gently.

"Yes, although I refer to them as pigs." and his smile grew wider than, almost devilish.

Will's smile could only mirror his, Hannibal's moods always had felt contagious.

Hannibal scooted closer.

"Alana might be right. Jack could ask you to work on the Chesapeake Ripper too for instance."

He paused to look at Will. His face had gotten back to its seriousness. His nice eyebrows were knit in a typing frown.

"Would that interest you Will, to try to catch him?" Hannibal almost whispered, leaning closer.

Will scowled. "I only have room for one killer in my mind. But yes, saving lives...it's always good."

"What about understanding him, his work."

"Oh, that's pretty simple. He grew up with taste, probably had trouble in his early teens, couldn't access the same status, now he gorges on it. He's pretty focused on aesthetics, worthiness. Yeah.." he said, rubbing his chin. "I guess he doesn't really feel cruel, he doesn't kill people. He kills sheep, or pigs to put it in your words."

"Why do you think?"

"Hannibal" Will deadpanned. "My mental space is consumed by the Supermarket Killer. The Chesapeake Ripper is not part of the puzzle. He was just a convenience to him. To hide his crime. The Supermarket Killer doesn't get off by being known, he's not narcissistic. He just had impulses to fulfill."

"Not the same profile." Hannibal whispered. "How do you think he would have killed you. The Ripper?"

"Hannibal..."

"I just like to hear you think out loud. Will. How would he have killed you?"

Will looked in Hannibal's intense eyes. They were molten but cold. He gulped loudly before answering in a slow voice. Tentative.

"He would've slit my rib cage. Would've probably taken my lungs since I'm not a smoker. Or a piece of my thigh if he was feeling ravenous."

Hannibal liked his lips. Will mirrored him nervously.

"Maybe tore my tongue out. I get rude when I'm scared. Displayed my on a nicer chair." Hannibal though of the throne he had seen at the antiquarian and smiled "Probably would've covered my groin too...and wouldn't have assaulted my sexually."

"Are you scared of the Chesapeake Ripper?"

Will gulped some whiskey, wishing his hands could stop trembling. "No. Why would he care about me?"

Hannibal leaned back and stared ahead. "Hypothetically, if I were a painter, and some amateur would sign my name under their oeuvre, I would feel compelled to take the canvas and repaint it, to show them how it's truly done."

Will stared at him incredulously. He didn't like what he was implying. Nor the way he was saying it. Like it was fun. Like they were not talking about his little beating heart working hard in his ribcage.

"Are you saying he might be after me?"

"Who knows..." Hannibal mused, running his thumb over a file. "But if he is you musn't take it personally."

Hannibal was going to say something else and Will cut him. He had to.

"Stop thinking so much about the Ripper. It's the Supermarket Killer I want."

"You want?"

Will's eyes squeezed shut as he imagined himself holding a grater and pressing it against his kidnapper's eyes.

"Yeah I want to catch him."

Hannibal came closer. His hand rested on Will's hip now.

"Not the FBI, you."

"Whichever."

"No, don't lie. You want him for your self, this is personal." he smiled into Will's neck.

Will's hands twitched.

"Tell me" Hannibal drawled "how would you kill him?"

Will gulped and closed his eyes.

"Painfully. Displayed."

And Hannibal wanted to kiss this little pig on the lips.

First Time Having Sex?

Chapter Notes

> There's going to be sex from the third indent till the end, so you can skip that if your are uncomfortable.

Hannibal retrieved the large package. He was pleased by his finding. It had taken longer than expected to find exactly what he had in mind, the precautions needed for shipping had added extra time but he knew the rewards.

The woodwork was beautiful, miniature and precise. Flowery. It would make for a great effect. Regal, nostalgic, beautiful. *Yes, that is how it was done*.

The throne would be stored. Soon, maybe in a few weeks if things kept going smoothly, he would be able to display his design.

The drive back to Baltimore was long. He did not enjoy the sight offered by the road nor did he take pleasure at stopping for his breaks. There was a lot to be done, and this was after all, time that had been stolen by *him*.

Bedilia had failed to grasp his righteousness earlier this month. Calling his attitude childish.

"It is the mark of a wounded ego, to pursue recognition after all." she had pointed out coolly.

Yes, he had had to admit. A wounded ego. But it was also more. The comparison, the claim, it had been preposterous.

And the FBI. It had been a testimony of how wrongly the world perceived him. A wrong had to be righted.

He ignored Bedilia's low curls that kept warning him of his distraction.

"You are under an influence Hannibal, you just don't realize it yet."

The concept was..unappealing. Soon life would get back to normal.

He was speeding along the park when he spotted Miss's Doug's husband. A small idea sparked in is mind. Decreasing his speed, he came to a halt.

Mr. Doug looked rather inconvenienced by the interruption. Surely, the Bentley prevented him from marching away. Hannibal rolled down the passenger's window to apostrophe the man.

"Mr. Doug, Doctor Lecter, your wife's psychiatrist"

Raising an eyebrow, the man fumbled with his fingers. "Ah, I didn't expect to meet you here Mr. Lecter." He tipped his hat in recognition, to which Hannibal answered with a curt nod.

"As luck would have it, I had a rather urgent matter to discuss with you."

The man took a step back, wary of the potential interaction.

"Look Dr. Lecter, I know my wife better than anybody else. I think we're making a good decision. She doesn't need therapy. She never did." he added rather firmly.

Hannibal checked his rear mirrors before turning back to the man.

"I'm afraid your wife has not been entirely honest with you Mr. Dough, he pressed." The husband crossed his arms and Hannibal couldn't help the small curl of his lips. Impending victory. "As she told you I used to be a surgeon?"

"She never talks about you, home is not a place for...unsavory topics." he said between pinched lips.

"Mr Doug" Hannibal said, leaning closer. "neither is the park. And what I need to tell you would fall prey to ungraceful ears. It is rather...lacking in charm."

The man stepped closer and Hannibal opened the passenger's door.

"This will be very quick. I know how much you care for your wife. This concerns her health directly."

The man stepped inside the unblemished vehicle and Hannibal smiled.

Hannibal was wiping his carving knife when he felt his phone vibrate in his pocket.

"Ah. Dear Will." he exhaled, as the man's name appeared on his screen.

It was a text message, shy and awkward about their knew development. Will was worried about Alana. He wanted to talk.

He thought about the man's scared eyes, the jitter of his hands on the stubbornness of his chin. His smile was carnivorous as he beckoned him over.

No, it wouldn't hurt to have a bit of fun.

Will arrived, hair messy but nails clean and shirt ironed. He was standing at the door awkwardly, like he needed an invitation to come inside.

Hannibal noted with smugness that he wasn't wearing any of that cologne today.

"I'm sorry about..." he gestured a large circle, that seemed to mean everything.

Hannibal simply smiled and stepped aside.

Will engulfed inside, in the stormy habit he had, the one that seemed to mark Hannibal's house with his presence days after he had gone.

Will kept walking ahead,until he reached the fire place.

"I don't know what this was...earlier in the office. I..."

"You like Alana Bloom." Hannibal supplied for him, amused at his battling morals.

"Yes."

"I don't see any problem. We haven't made a promise to each other, nor did you do to her. Nor I to her."

"I'm not into threesomes Hannibal." Will warned unamused.

"Too bad" the man replied smiling.

Will looked at Lecter more seriously. There was something that disturbed him in his detachment.

Hannibal came closer, at hand's reach. Will tensed, suspicious and guilty. There was this sudden anxiety again. The one that told him he was tipping towards an edge. Going from yesterday to tomorrow.

"We can pretend we never kissed." Hannibal said softly.

Will swallowed as Hannibal's hand covered his shoulder.

"We can pretend it never felt good." he added.

And caught Will's bottom lip with his own.

Will moaned as his mouth dried at the anxiousness the kiss provoked in him. His hands came up to Hannibal's chest. An aborted attempt to push him away.

Hannibal pulled him closer by the elbows, moaned himself in Will's mouth.

Will felt his cock urgently fill in his pants. He gasped when he managed to pull away from the Doctor.

Hannibal had the eyes of a lazy cat. Patient and certain of the outcome of its chase.

"Hannibal" he chastised. "I came here to talk..."

Hannibal laughed. He seized Will's hips and pressed the professor's erection to him. Feeling its hard line on his pelvis, eliciting a response in his own manhood.

"Alana's supposed to be the over-thinking one, is she not?" before Will could protest, he caught his lips again.

"Mhmph, kissing you is like coming to the rain after running hours in the sun. Not nearly enough to qualm the burn." he said, biting Will's lip, "I want to drink you up Will Graham."

When Will pushed him again, Hannibal griped his chin provocatively.

"I didn't make any promises, neither did you. What is wrong with enjoying what we feel and need?" he pressed.

Will's erection twitched as he' was washed away by Hannibal's undivided attention. He turned his head away. Endured the way his belly pulled at his cock, suffered from the tight anticipation of his testicles and the tingling pinches of his scrotum.

He looked at Hannibal. Regal Hannibal. Absolute Hannibal, and kissed him fiercely.

Hannibal rocked into him soothingly, making him feel accepted in a way he had never experienced before. He didn't feel broken as the man slipped an arm under his stomach, neither did he feel like a burden when he felt the strong puffs of the Doctor against his cheek. He moaned low when Hannibal pushed in deep an stayed there, making him feel the space his cock was taking, forcing him to acknowledge his presence inside of him.

"Do you like this Will?" he asked, between two thrusts, mouth suckling on a strand of hair. Will pressed his forehead deep in the mattress and arched his back to connect with Hannibal's hips which had gone still. "Yes" he moaned. Pleased, Hannibal resumed his thrusting, taking advantage of a particularly loud moan to introduce a finger in Will's mouth.

"This what meant to be" he assured, contenting himself with the flesh of the mechanic.

Hannibal left Will's back were he had been pressing his torso. He stood behind the man now, hands gripping the slender hips, enjoying the view of his prize.

The small dark curly hairs, the point of the tail bone. The gaping hole that took him in.

Will looked at him from over his shoulder. Looked at the man's eyes glistening with pleasure as he took him languidly, in deep, regular and controlled thrusts. He blinked, still surprised of his attraction for a man from the same sex, yet Hannibal wasn't really a man. Just Hannibal.

"Mmhm, don't stop" he mumbled, earning him a chuckle. "I don't intend to dearest" his lover smiled, stopping his coming and going for a brief second to press a kiss between Will's shoulder blades.

"Good" the professor said, closing his eyes, enjoying the sensation of being penetrated slowly and intently.

"Are you good at everything you do Hannibal?" he teased, squeezing around the man's length.

"Don't Will" the man said rather sternly.

Will laughed, "don't want to lose control do we?".

"No" he concurred in a clipped voice. "I am very intent on enjoying this through and through, it would be rude to eat such a delicate meal in one mouthful." he clarified.

Will squeezed him again for fun and the man jerked. From the corner of his blue eyes he could see the flash of intense concentration it took for the Doctor not to come right then in there. Hannibal looked angry, mostly unused to people defying his authority.

The man stilled and dropped his hands to Will's thighs. He gripped them with a warning, "Do not do this again Will" he said looking into the others eyes. Will only smiled.

"I'll be a good boy" he murmured to appease his annoyed mate. "Besides I'm enjoying this" he added, trying to convince his lover to start moving again.

Will groaned at the first thrust, it was obviously punitive but in a way he could enjoy. He let Hannibal pick the pace and strength he wanted, slightly upset at the actual anger he had felt from the man. Soon though, under the tickles of steady fingers against his ribs and praises muttered by burgundy lips he forgot about it, letting the warmth in his groin accumulate until it was unbearable. He oozed and spilled with a shiver that tightened his hole as well as his ball sack. Coating in small ropes the expensive blue sheets and forcing Hannibal to finish earlier than intended. The man was vocal about his satisfaction in a way that probably would have made him hard all over again if he hadn't just spent himself so vigorously.

The Freeing Angel

Chapter Summary

Hannibal is confused.

Chapter Notes

IMPORTANT: Uhm...so I published "Freeing Angel" before "First Time Having Sex?" when it actually comes after. I simply inverted them so you can go check that chaper now. It all nails down to a rather small detail but I still think it's more coherent in that order. Sorry for the inconvenience °:/

Will opened mechanically the belly of the trout he had caught. It was small but fresh. He watched the blood spill out and put a finger in. To feel the insides.

He unrolled the intestines. Marveled at the length of the tightly coiled rope. Tied his index fingers together with it. Bound.

When he realized he was recreating the Ripper's scene, he stopped. Abruptly. Feeling ashamed and guilty. He quickly finished gutting it and laid it on the pan.

He closed his eyes at the sound of the skin fizzling.

The angel danced behind his eye lids. Bound. Soon free. Beautiful. Strange that the Ripper could understand such earthly things.

*

"It can't be the Ripper. He kills by sounders of three."

"It is." Alana confirmed.

"Definitely took the liver out. Same surgical cuts too." Beverly added.

"How do you explain it?"

"Maybe he has a new found motivation?"

"A muse?" Jack frowned.

Alana nodded. Beverly bit her lips.

"More work for us." she sighed.

Jack only stared back. His shoulders sagging with the weight of his responsibility.

"I'm going to call Will." he finally said.

"Might as well promote him consultant at this rate" the lab tech joked.

It didn't please Alana. She stepped forward with her arms crossed. "Will's the very recent victim of a violent crime. You cannot expose him."

"He has a talent." Jack objected.

"Stay away from him" she warned.

Jack looked at her angry face, too polite to tell her that she didn't have the power to threaten him. Instead he patted her elbow.

"I respect him Alana. I won't let him get too close. I promise."

Jack had called. Will had answered. Frustrated this wasn't about the Supermarket Killer. Flattered to be useful. Flabbergasted at the picture.

He didn't know what was wrong with him. If he was dried up and empty inside. Not even moved at the death of someone.

Moved simply by the art.

Its beauty.

An angel taking off from the peer. Hands tied by his spilling intestines to the mooring bitt. Wings carved in the muscles of his back, straightened by silken strings.

Eyes driven upwards to the sky.

"What is he saying" jack patiently asked.

Will was mesmerized by the view. He wished he could have seen it in flesh.

The thought unsettled him. He roused, trying to shake the feeling of awe off.

Barbarian. Cruel. Violent. Bad. Like the Supermarket Killer.

Do not identify yourself.

"He's just...expressing himself."

"This is soft" Jack replied. "Not spiteful".

"I think he's....no" he muttered, rubbing his chin.

"Say whatever you want Will. It can always be useful. And I have a team to decide if it's not."

"It's like he's communicating?" he said checking over his shoulder to watch the agent's reaction.

Jack Crawford hadn't moved from the arm chair. He was diligently petting Winston's head.

"Not to us. It's intimate."

"Yes...you're just in the way. He's talking to..." he hesitated on the word. Feeling guilty for identifying himself so much. "to a friend. Trying to help. It's a...poetic recommendation."

Jack blinked. "He has a friend?"

"I think. An equal at least. It's encouragement."

"So you're sure it's the Ripper."

"Yes."

"You think he's encouraging someone to kill?"

Will shook his head.

Killing must feel good. Imagine if you could kill him. How would that make you feel?

"Yes. He sees the potential for a partner."

"A mentoree" Jack said raising an eyebrow. "Thank-you Will. I'm sorry to bother you with this." the big man said, getting up slowly. "I appreciate the help."

Will nodded.

He shook Jack large trustworthy hands as he passed the door.

Before leaving Jack turned around.

"Alana's worried that I'm giving you dark thoughts."

"Darkness is all around." Jack. "You're not hurting me."

"Okay" he murmured. Putting his hat back on. "I'll keep you updated. Rest well. And if you have some time, one of these day's I'd be interested to be taught how to use those beautiful lures of yours."

Will nodded more vigorously. "Thanks Jack. Drive safe."

After the freeing angel

Chapter Summary

What can a brain do when faced with such hatred?

Chapter Notes

Reminder that I inverted chapter 18 and 19 in case some of you haven't read n°18.
This small chapter is a bit fucked up and sad. Warning for description of violent and sexual pictures.

The Ripper's angel had done things to him. A few days later when he had found an envelope, he had no longer trembled with disgust but ire. He quickly looked over the pile of photo-shopped bodies. Gang bangs, cum and semen filled, BDSM, ropes and rape. Over and over. A childish focus on mutilating the anus...

"You're giving me too many ideas" he said out loud. A flash -he always had a good imagination- of his captor, bound, face down on his own bed...bleeding out places that weren't meant to be displayed, jumping in his head. It was when he laughed at the idea and had felt a rush of energy at it that he knew something was wrong. Alana had been right.

"A monster. I'm becoming a monster."

It was like all of the hatred in the world had been channeled down to him. And he had no means of release.

*

"I'm scared, I don't understand. I don't know what to think."

He trembled in front of Hannibal. Desperate to be gathered in the man's eyes but resolutely alone.

"You mustn't confuse them Will."

"I don't" he said shaking.

"This swine and the Chesapeake Ripper or not two sides of the same coin."

"I know."

Something told him to say it out loud. Something ugly and something true. Something he knew would gain Hannibal's approval. No matter how strange this thought appeared.

"He's an artist. He's offering beauty. They should be honored that their pitiful disgusting existence were transformed by him."

He looked up to Hannibal, squeezing his hands.

The man stepped forward and held him.

"They're nothing alike" he repeated.

"No" Hannibal smiled into his curls.

"The Supermarket is trapped by his instincts and fears." "The Ripper is. Perfect in the etymological sens of the term."

"Complete potential" Hannibal sighed against his neck.

Will pressed hard against Hannibal, still so cold and shaking.

Hannibal kissed his crown.

"You truly have a remarkable instinct" he praised.

Will ate up the compliment, pressed himself deeper in Hannibal.

"What made you react like that dear Will?" the psychiatrist soothed as he petted the messy hair.

"Someone sent me an envelop."

"Are you scared of its content?"

The photo-shopped pornographic images flashed through his mind. His face on top of a foreigner's body. Fucked by a horse. Impaled, bleeding semen on a pink background with hearts. Dressed in a golden attired and ridding someone as he sucked an other and jerked off two other men.

Will and Hannibal squeezed their eyes shut.

"No" he breathed. "Not of it's content."

It wasn't him. Would never be.

Hannibal held him tighter against his chest. He combed the sides of his skull and stared into his eyes; reminding him of the a violent painting of a gray storm destroying and swallowing the world. A small apocalypse.

"Then what are you scared of?" he asked voice fragile.

Will tried to lower his eyes but Hannibal's hands held his head into place.

"Of what I could do." he admitted.

Hannibal kissed him fully on the lips.

"Don't ever run from yourself." Hannibal whispered in the shell of his hear. "Never. Not with me. You cannot be ashamed of yourself."

Will didn't understand. He wasn't making any sense. He was so lost.

He kissed Hannibal back after what he sank to his knees.

Not knowing yourself is a terrible feeling.

He anchored himself on Hannibal's cock.

Got back colors in his cheeks from the rich white seed he was fed.

He dropped his head and smiled in Hannibal's pubic hair. Not bothering to wipe his mouth. He couldn't hear his thoughts anymore. All he could hear was Hannibal's moaned orgasm in his eardrums.

Will and Hannibal's smiles broadened.

You Will be my Prison

A guilty Will woke up confused in the warmth of a bed too large to be his own. The sheets felt divine against his legs. He rubbed them to feel their watery texture against his hairs.

He turned to see the clock indicating eleven already. He groaned, hiding his face behind his now rough palms.

Since when did he sleep so late? And what about his dogs? Someone was bound to have peed inside.

He shifted closer to Hannibal's body, suddenly needing to scent it. He pressed his nose along his back, smelling his vertebrae.

Will let out another sigh. This had been pleasant. But was this him? Where was he in all of this?

"I must say I'm quite ashamed." Hannibal's morning voice said ruffly "We've indulged like hormonal teenagers. But we mustn't be ashamed of indulging in each other. Especially not you Will, you eagerly box yourself in restrictive corners."

Will dug his hands in the meat of his back in response.

Hannibal turned around to engulf him in an embrace where they tangled their limbs.

They pressed their foreheads together and smiled at the feeling of their warm sticky bodies pressing against each other. The morning scents only made it more intimate.

They kissed strangely. In a way that had nothing to do with yesterday. It didn't feel like desire, nor did it feel like indulgence. It felt like a right.

Will broke up the kiss after a while, wanting to sort out the overwhelming feelings rooting in his chest.

But Hannibal followed him. The man's soft amber eyes looked at him gently before his hand came to cover his.

Hannibal's palm swept over his hand.

Will looked at Hannibal as he felt him. His eyes were closed, he looked dazed and concentrated. Happy and grateful. Pinched.

Like he had so much energy and life in him. A thousand promises in his hands and a thousand dreams in his feet.

So that's what it felt like to be Hannibal's paramour...

Like you were fresh bread out of the oven.

Like you were the only book which had survived the Reich chamber of culture.

Will closed his eyes to better feel Hannibal's warmth on his body.

Their combined breathing was silent but in synch.

He felt the palms move on to his shoulders, thumbs dip in his clavicles and pull at his ears.

Will was incredibly aroused, yet he did not want it to stop, nor did he wish to act upon it.

He wanted this to be as real as possible, as soft as possible...

The words "I love you" menaced to tip off of his lips for the third time and he bucked to gulp them back.

Hannibal mistook it for desire. His hand left his cheek to trap his turgescent cock.

Will scrunched up his nose and withered on the green-purple sheets.

When he felt Hannibal's lower lip rubbing at his tip he jerked again.

"Don't" he breathed out. "Keep touching all of me"

Hannibal's eyes lifted to his tight face. He smiled and kissed the head of his cock again but obeyed.

He nosed the dark coarse and curly pubic hair. Inhaled as he let his hands slide down along Will's legs.

He went up and down in order to feel his hairs, pinched to find the little fat he could find as he continued to smell his groin.

Will whined when his warm breath left him.

He felt Hannibal lace his fingers in his toes. Felt him dig his nails in the hardened soles of his feet and squirmed as each of his nails received a kiss and a lick.

Hannibal's hands slid back up, fast and overwhelming to stop on his chest, flat and heavy as he pushed his weight on Will's pectorals.

The psychiatrist stayed immobile for a while. Will knew from behind his closed eyelids that he was drinking him in. Appreciating his sight.

Like it was the last time he would be able to see him.

Like all of this, Will's existence was so ephemeral.

Like he were to die so soon.

It created a bubble of unease in his gut. Will was compelled to open his eyes now. The menace of immediate danger.

He grit his teeth. Why did this stupid paranoia have to ruin this for him?

He closed his eyes tighter, wishing the fear away.

A soothing lip came to catch his.

It wasn't enough.

Will's breath caught in his throat when he felt Hannibal's ear press itself against his heart.

His fear left him as he experienced the softness of Hannibal's white hair brushing against his sensitive skin.

"You sound so beautiful" Hannibal whispered.

And that was what a lover sounded like. Subjective, biased and persuaded. Stricken.

And for the fourth time again, Will felt "I love you" was going to escape his pressed lips.

And it felt like this was the tale Doctor Lecter had told him with his hands.

How Far Will I Go

Chapter Summary

Hannibal hates being confused.

Chapter Notes

Thank you for the kudos and comments, I'm grateful you read this far!
Denouement:

It was barely a day later. The night was young enough but Will had gone to bed early. He had left for school and after his lengthy sick leave, it had left him unprepared for the efforts.

What seemed mundane before bared the weight of difficulty. Normalcy was an anomaly. Smiling felt like lying and talking couldn't be light.

He had indulged in four or maybe six fingers of whiskey. Probably more. To punish his thoughts for roaming towards Hannibal in a time of duress.

He hadn't answered his phone call anyway. William had cringed at his dependency. He was too used to his availability.

"What am I doing" he had thought as he curled on the couch capturing Zoe between his chest and knees. The dog had only quietly protested. Understanding melancholy as an important emotion to guard her master against.

When he had gone to bed, it was with a slight headache and a sadder heart.

Around midnight, after some insistence, Will finally woke up with a start.

His body was electrified. Terribly aware.

It didn't take long for him to realize his dogs had been the ones to rouse him.

They were at the door. All of them.

Growling menacingly at something. Their teeth revealed from their black lips. Their commotion was urgent. Instinctively, he knew their protests were not meant to alert him, but to dissuade whatever was outside.

William sat up on the bed, cold determination filling his bones. He felt the entirety of his body. To the pull of his skin to the sharpness of his kneecaps.

He climbed off and shoved his boots on, bothering only with a coat. He grabbed his rifle and stepped affirmatively outside.

As soon as Will closed the door behind him, he was forced to cover his eyes.

A loud honk screeched at his ears as headlights were turned on barely two feet away from him.

Partially blinded and disoriented, Will backed against the door and hitched his gun up.

The sound of the trigger going off and the bang resonated loudly.

He heard the sound of glass caving in and the barks of his dogs going hysterical. They were pounding at the door, desperate to go out and assist.

He put his finger against the trigger once more, when he felt a presence next to him.

He hadn't realized enough time had passed. His heart was beating too loudly.

Will dropped the rifle in an attempt to recover both arms. He needed to fight off the offender but his throat was chocked from behind.

The pressure on his Adam’s apple was alarming, he knew he needed to act quickly if he didn't want his larynx to be crushed.

Will jabbed his elbow blindly, hoping to find a target.

When it connected with tissue, his hazy mind managed to note the hardness of the stomach. The blow barely drew a breath out of his assaulter.

His puffs were discreet to his ears, deafened by the pumping of his blood.

Will let a chocked sound escape his mouth. It sounded like a gurgle. He raked his nails on the ever tightening forearm.

When he failed to elicit a reaction with that he slammed himself back against them, hitting both of them against the wall and managing to free his neck enough to chomp out the meat of a strong bicep.

Will tore the skin and ripped, spitting it defiantly only before regretting the focus he had sacrificed.

The needle that entered him was bleak and he could only whimper a protest has his useless body fell to the ground.

*

Will's morning alarm had ringed to no avail. His morning class was passed. The sun was bright up, the birds exchanging information loudly, the dogs worried and quite.

The Earth was still rotating on its axis.

He woke up with his dogs surrounding him. They were all on the bed, which was normally forbidden. As they caught sight of his wakefulness, they started licking at face, his hands, his knees, any piece of skin they could catch.

Will tried to push them away. He felt sluggish. His skull felt too small. His skin too tight. His cells dehydrated.

A flash of thundering panic stroke him. A memory of last night resurfaced, then another, and another.

He fought to get up, trying to make sense of his environment. To find proof of a presence.

His boots were where he had left them in the evening.

His rifle was under the bed. He frantically counted the bullets but realized he hadn't known their count in the first place. He couldn't say if any was missing.

He was confused. His throat ached.

He pushed his dogs away once more as they circled him. Their attitude was his main clue that something had gone wrong. They were looking after their master.

He looked at his hands which were clean of blood. Will forced himself to calm down as he checked the rest of his body. It didn't retain any sign of an altercation.

He rushed outside in a desperate attempt to prove himself he wasn't crazy. Will searched the ground, knelt in the dirt to find a bullet he was so sure to have fired to abide to nothing.

Nothing was left to think that something had happened last night.

Nothing but the ache in his body and the bump on his neck.

Someone had come here to murder him and had retracted. For some reason, they had decided to spare him. It didn't make any sense but Will knew it wasn't the Supermarket Killer.

He remembered the feeling of his body against his.

This was someone else.

This was the Chesapeake Ripper. The Chesapeake Ripper had come to his house.

He was sure of it. It was the only thing that made sense.

He called the first person he could think of.

The phone rang and rang. It was close to three and Will prayed for her not to be out on a story.

Finally, she picked up.

"You're here about my new article?" Freddie's voice asked him.

Will froze. "Article?" he had a foreboding feeling about this. Someone was dead, he was sure of it. Someone was dead instead of him. Of him.

"The Chesapeake Ripper?" he wheezed.

"Uh yeah, it's about him. Graham, I don't think you should read it..."

Will slid against the wall.

He was only surrounded by silence, let the white noise produced on the phone as Freddie waited for him to explain himself.

"Are you alright?" she said, pressing her ear harder against the receiver in the hope of getting a clue as to what was going on.

"I was attacked yesterday night." he admitted.

It felt good to say it out loud. Like it really had happened. Like he wasn't crazy.

"Are you alright Graham?" she repeated more pressing. "I'm going to call an ambulance." she said.

"No, no." whoever it was, they're gone. "I'll call Jack" he assured, "Thanks Fred".

Freddie Lound's bit her lips as the man hung up. Her reporter's nose was twitching.

Will was feeling both frantic and dried out to the bone.

He forced himself up and into the shower. All he could think about was that article, but he couldn't read it right now. Not when his mind was going in over drive.

He emerged red and dripping from the bathroom, having left the heat to the maximum.

Zoe came to lick at his ankles, as she took it upon herself to dry him with her little tongue.

A tired smile broke on his face. Will picked her and brought her up. She licked him and he returned a kiss to her small white forehead.

It was time to feed the lot...and to read that article.

*

The first thing that he saw was the picture. A body was sitting on a throne of wood. A beautiful intricate craftsmanship. The cadaver stiffening on it was bare for a sunflower

covering its genitalia. It had a crown on its head, spiked and majestic, peppered with cream and rose sea pearls. On their lap a mirror of gold. At their feet a bitten apple of amber.

The face was bloated and thick. The inflicted stiffening deforming it. Its origin betrayed by the trickle from its lips. The man had been injected with an alloy of liquid gold until it had bled out of his orifices.

Will closed his eyes as he saw the Ripper do his work. This his how it is done, this is what my work look s like. This is my design, to show you how inferior and pathetic you are to me.

Will's eyes jumped to focus on the Wallmart key-chain under the victim's foot. You will die next, crushed by your failure. It was a promise.

Will set aside his computer on closed his eyes.

He considered calling Jack. A need to see the body was consuming him. Something in him needed to make this real.

He shook in his chair for a while. Lost at the feeling of being sucked in by the void. Like gravity didn't matter anymore. Like Earth could never be dense enough to keep him rooted. The black hole was too big, it had rules of its own.

This was his life now. Murders, blood, cruelty and perversion.

He closed his eyes as he tried to remember what it felt like to be him before.

When he looked more like his dad.

When he was alone, with his dogs and his small job. Comfortable and anonymous. Special but safe in his niche of expertise.

Yet the saddest part of himself realized that this world, this darkness...it didn't even look unfamiliar. He couldn't even say it didn't fit him.

"You're a natural" Bev had said.

A natural at facing corpses, empathizing with killers. Who was he anymore, anyway? Had he ever known himself...

"You're running away from yourself Will" Hannibal's voice murmured in his memories. "You're scared of who you can be."

*

Will saw the body and found a slight terror gripping him. He scouted closer to Jack, wary of his exposed backside and trudge closer, seeking protection.
Jack kept a mindful eye on him, gentling him into the cold tub.

Will was almost compelled to touch what could only be his deceased twin.

"What is he doing here? That's sick."

Will turned to Beverly's voice. The tone made Jack look away.

"I'm fine Bev. I wanted to come here. I wanted to see."

"We know it's the Ripper, there's nothing to read. You're torturing yourself."

Her tone was final and something sad and broken in his loins purred at her concern.

"I've been living in a dream for weeks... I just needed to make this real" he whispered.

Beverly wasn't convinced but she let him go, she stared pointedly at Jack, warning him to take care of their protege.

Jack stared at the white ceiling for a bit before he came closer to Will and laid a large hand on his shoulder. He squeezed lightly as he observed the man's tight face.

"Something's wrong in the tableau."

"It's not you." Jack simply said and Will could not argue against that.

"Yeah it's not me", he thought.

"I'm done." he told Jack, "don't hesitate if you need anything, I appreciate your hard work."

Jack turned around to watch Will march away.

"You can ask me anything" he assured, and Will believed him. Believed that Jack would cross oceans for him.

They were not exactly friends, but both of them understood the meaning of loyalty.

Just like Beverly did.

Just like his dogs.

The Chesapeake Ripper had meant to kill him yesterday night. He had changed his mind.

He was going to catch the Supermarket Killer...

*

Will was sweating so much by the time he reached his house that he went straight to the bathroom, setting the water on the coldest temperature he could.

Something was wrong in the Chesapeake Ripper's affirmation. Something was confused. His design had been murky.

As if he was trying to imitate himself, as if he was confused. Changed.

There was not enough violence in the crime scene. The throne was too beautiful, the crown of pearls didn't belong in the picture. They were a sign of purity. Innocence. Femininity. The body too softly displayed. As if he was regretfully a means to an end. As if he knew the victim.

Will's heartbeat quickened as he couldn't say which victim he knew. The replacement one or the original.

Who was he kidding?

Sharply he turned the water to scalding.

There was guilt running inside his neck. The imminent sensation that he could have stopped this. As if he had the power in him to stop the Ripper.

How would it feel to save a life?

When he stepped out of the shower he couldn't help it. Alana be damned. He broke the mirror again. Couldn't stand that his envelope hid so much of his truth.

God Alana, he needed to see her. Needed someone to believe in the best of him. Needed reassurance. That he wasn't responsible for anything. For what had happened to him. To them.

But only Hannibal tried to see him for who he was. And Hannibal wasn't safe. Something was so terribly wrong about the man, about their relationship, about him.

He just had a feeling, a creeping feeling.

He couldn't explain, nor justify. Nor act upon it. Just endure.

The idea that maybe, maybe Hannibal's and his encounter never had been a chance meeting.

That Hannibal's primary interest had never been friendship.

That...

Will shook, as all he could think of was that painting he had seen when he was still a student.

L'enfer de Saint Augustin.

He visualized that green infamous demon, staring back at him with its white eyes, laying in the center on his throne of pain. Its belly was fat and porcine in its indulgence. All the bodies he had trapped were wailing in his hands or in the open pool of its stomach.

"He's going to devour me", he said out loud, as he saw Hannibal's face in the back of his retinas.

Will shook again. As he couldn't summon the idea of denouncing him to the police.

It made him a scared hypocrite. And gave him a new reason to hate himself.

How fitted for how he was feeling the mirror was. Will shed tears he had long refused to grant passage to. Flowing steadily across his cheeks, as silent as his presence in the house. He didn't know who he was anymore. Never had he felt as lonely as now, for now he didn't even have himself.

That's how recovery goes. You get better for a short while and you pummel back down, a punishment for having tried to forget.

Was Hannibal really a killer? He had fallen in love with the man, had trusted him. His confidant, his partner. The worst admits the betrayal of Hannibal, was the betrayal Will had done to himself.

First time knowing who he is, I see you

Chapter Summary

Shit hit the fan but it was running on low...

Chapter Notes

Thank you for all of you that have read this far

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Hannibal paused mid stroke as he heard tires screech on the concrete.

He slowly rose from his chair to peer between the curtains. Disheveled, furious, beautiful Will Graham was marching towards his house.

He flew across the corridor, in time to catch the door at the first knocking.

He didn't pry it open right away.

Choosing to close his eyes and enjoy the sound of these hands hitting the wood.

They were separated by a door. A wooden door.

Nothing else.

Hannibal opened it.

"You, you bastard, you wanted to kill me!" Will shouted, shoving Hannibal out of the way.

Hannibal staggered back, unable to properly respond physically.

"Yes. I did." he could only say, as emotion caught the words in his tight throat.

"You have been playing me all along!" Will said, pointing his finger accusingly towards him.

"No. Will..I was, enjoying the ride. Going with the flow, if you want to put it that way." he offered as a meek explanation.

"You're the fucking Chesapeake Ripper!" he bellowed.

William was furious, his face was scrunched in a mock imitation of a canine's. The lines of anger suited him like a deity.

Hannibal simply nodded.

He was possessed to cup Will's cheeks with his hands, trying to connect and speak through his pores.

He pressed them on either sides of his hexagonal jaw.

"I am the Chesapeake Ripper William. I wanted to kill you. To eat your lungs." he said, kneeling. "I wanted to put you on a throne of gold and crown you with a chaplet of amber. Spread dandelions at your feet. But this design...it wasn't a spite anymore." he finished in a whisper kissing Will's knees through his dark blue jeans.

"I love you." Will admitted, choking on his voice.

Disgusted with himself and yet utterly whole, for he had found a house for his soul. "I love you" he repeated, more assertive, carrying the weight of his words with the honesty in his eyes.

Hannibal's lips parted in a show of emotion. Betraying his joy. Over the power he now was certain to have over Will. Over the safety of his own heart, which could have been left on the mat of the man's door. Unwelcome.

When all the fears and doubts let in the light of the truth euphoria came in, knocking away his guard and filling him with unbridled enthusiasm.

Hannibal rose. His hands seized Will by his curls, forcing his head forward and pressing their his lips against each other. The man whined at its force. The kiss was a simple harsh press of their flesh one against the other, but conveyed well enough the desperate adoration the man had been infected with. Will was his demise. The only one that could hurt him, the only threat that was greater than his superiority.

He pulled back to look into Will's misty eyes, not knowing how much or where to touch the man that was now his. He was almost scared of breaking him with the force of his passion, Will was too beautiful and vulnerable to be played with right now. He had opened his rib cage and set apart the bones to uncover that small beating heart of his. Hannibal needed to take it in carefully, breaking Will wouldn't do.

*

"Yes ?"

"Yes" he gently agreed. As if his consent mattered. As if he was important. Was this what Stockholm syndrome felt like, was this it ?

Hannibal's eyes shone with a strange gleam. Hope. Or was it ? Why would Hannibal hope anything from him, it would mean he cared. Sadists didn't care.

He grunted as the cock penetrated his orifice. The invasion was unpleasant. It hurt. He wanted to tell him that it did but he was scared. Telling a sadist that something hurt was like encouraging them to proceed forward. He grit his teeth and said nothing, eyes drifting to the ceiling.

A calloused hand cupped his cheek, forcing his eyes to meet their owner's.

"No Will, not like that" the cannibal whispered, concern dancing on his features.

Will looked at him confused, lips seized his own and he closed his eyelids reflexively. The kiss was enjoyable. Just like everything else he did, Hannibal was excellent at that too. The barest suction was pleading his upper lip to stay and the bottom one was caressed by tender attention.

He sighed into the kiss, muscles unwinding, letting the man borrow deeper in his intimacy. Hannibal sighed and broke the kiss, pressing himself deeper, root connecting with a tender cleft.
Will tried to close his eyes but Hannibal forbade it.

"Not like you don't want it Will." he protested. "You want this, as much as I do. Don't deny yourself what will sooth your heart." Will choked on a tear. He was right, he had no place to hide from Hannibal. Why couldn't he let himself fall into the sensation of lovemaking, because convention told him he was bad ? When had society ever given him something substantial ?

Will hooked his legs on Hannibal's thighs, welcoming him and inviting him inside by digging his hard heels against the meat of his muscles. Obeying the man over him. He moaned in unison with Hannibal.

"Ooh yes" he sighed finally. Letting desire and pleasure wash over him, chasing fear and guilt to another island of his mind. "Take me Hannibal" he begged. "Heal me".

"Yes" the man assured, "I will make you happy, I always repay those who have gifted me."

Will sobbed, hands coming up to hold the doctor's elbows "please"

Hannibal petted his curls protectively, revealing with the twitch of his mouth how pleased he was at Will's words. "Of course Will" he answered. "Anything for you" he finished, pulling himself out and burying back in in an expert roll of his hips. "Anything.."

*

Will woke up with a start. Everything was dark, he was blind but could smell and feel so much. Sex and sweat, Hannibal's cologne, his hips and his thighs. His cleft was tender and raw, wet and sticky. He was cold, laying naked, covers discarded to the side. He knew he wasn't in his bedroom, his shutters always let a trickle of moonlight in. He was at Hannibal's.

He tried to calm his breathing, trying to figure out if the other was with him. He was met with silence. His ears strained, desperate to catch something. After a while he caught it. Hannibal's

soft breathing. He made a sound with the back of his throat as he took the air in, the position he was seeping in probably bending his airway.

It hit him how easily he could kill the man right now. Vulnerable and dead to the world, senses dulled by sleep. He could claim self defense, prove Hannibal's tendencies and say he had intended to eat him.

Instead he buried back in the covers and buried himself in the others body, needing the warmth. Desperate to flee the feeling of guilt and utter loss he was feeling. He didn't know who he was anymore. All he knew and understood was Hannibal.

Morning came and he was awaken again. This time it was by a soft kiss on his mouth.

"How did you sleep Will?"

"Like someone who slept with a serial killer." he grit.

Hannibal looked hurt. He recoiled on himself, before standing up.

"I'll make us breakfast." he eventually said, draping his nudity with a silken blue robe.

"No human meat." Will warned.

Hannibal only turned around to his comment, but didn't answer, he closed the door softly behind him and Will let out a pained sigh.

He came downstairs a while later. Freshly showered and freed from Hannibal's musk.

"I left a glass of freshly squeezed grapefruit juice on the counter for you, beloved."

Will shook at the nickname.

Was this his life know, domestic with a cannibal?

Hannibal's hand tightened on the spatula he was using to stir the peppers.

"Not like this Will" he murmured in an echo of yesterday's night. "Not like you don't want me."

"You think I have a choice?" he spat. "Why would I willingly come to you?" his face was distorted with anger.

"Have a seat Will, let's not ruin breakfast. We can talk as much as you need after. I will explain everything to you."

"I can't do this." Will said, refusing to sit.

The flash of pain was back on Hannibal's face. It was intense, jarring, like a stab to several locations at his gut.

"Are you going to call the police Will?" he asked softly. Hannibal's eyes were still soft. There was a lingering fear in the back of his pupils. But it wasn't the police he was scared of.

"No." Will said reluctantly.

When Hannibal left the frying pan to come at his side, Will took a step back.

"Please don't touch me" he pleaded, shutting his eyes tightly.

Hannibal retracted his hand as if he had been shot.

He pursued his lips in anger and waited for Will to talk, desperate for a different outcome.

"Give me more" Will said.

"More?"

"Think for a minute, you expect me to throw away who I used to be and who I was going to be. I need some sort of assurance."

"Assurance?" he repeated, slowly gripping the table. "You accuse me of tempering with your mind but now that I give you free will you claim abandonment?" he countered cleverly. He turned off the stove slowly, waiting for Will to fall out of his bewilderment.

He had dropped his gaze to his feet in shame. Had he just asked Hannibal to be his puppet?

"I need time with myself" he finally said, eyes coming back to Hannibal's face.

The man's jaw had tightened to his words. Of course he had wished for Will to jump right away in his lurid arms. But he preferred a well thought out answer out of a lie.

"Come back to me when I am your choice" Hannibal said, grieving at the slow nod of Wills head "Come to me as a free man".

He watched the man's pained face close off. Watched him walk away towards his entrance.

Hannibal dropped the towel and started running after him, he caught Will right when he was pulling at the door knob.

Will turned around bewildered. Hannibal was disheveled and painted a picture of sorrow.

"Mylimasis" he breathed in his nape.

They stayed minutes like this, with Hannibal breathing in his scent and Will holding unto the comfort of his strong back.

"I have to go." he finally croaked.

Hannibal stayed long after he had closed the door behind him.

Chapter End Notes

I have three non-endings. Two with a death (but not the same character) and one with imprisonment. I might do all three because choosing isn't a forte of mine.

Wolf mistaken for a sheep

Chapter Notes

> Sorry for the wait, life and all...
> I hope this ending won't disappoint you, if it does I don't mind you telling me. I was torn between coherence and indulgence and bleurgh.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

To be allowed. To be greedy and demanding. To be powerful without control or obligation. Without shame. To be ugly.

This is what he felt as he drove the lures into the man's pupils. The scream of terror that resonated made birds escape the nearby trees.

Will laughed at the irony as he repeated the man's own words. "No one's there to rescue you. I'm going to have so much fun."

The last was said with a snarl. He watched the Supermarket Killer stumble around, trying to find him in the new found darkness, flaying arms and legs to connect his fists.

Will silently stepped back, watching him with contempt. He let his coat fall to the ground. Then his shirt. When his belt clunked on the ground his victim froze.

"I'm naked" Will informed him. "That's how you liked me didn't you?"

"I knew you were a slut!" he screeched, throwing himself in his direction.

Will broke the whiskey bottle on his head. It was a harsh movement that sent the man to the ground. Killing was so easy.

"Stop." the man begged on the ground at his feet.

Will crouched. His body felt buzzed, like the physical limitations of it were blurred. He slowly started to rake the broken glass on the blind man's face.

He was slapped by the killer at some point but the sensation didn’t' register.

He threw the bottle away and grasped the hands of his captor.

Made him touch his naked chest.

Will didn't feel the cold. He was bare. But not exposed. His body no longer an object of desire. It was an object of victory. The way evolution had meant it.

"That's what you wanted?" Somewhere in the corner of his mind he registered how violated his twin had felt that day, as their flesh had connected.

"Nooo" the ripped mouth gurgled, trying to pry the hands away from the sweaty chest.

"That's what you get."

Another scream, then another, it seemed never ending as he cut off the fingers slowly. He hadn't registered doing it until the slippery liquid has started pissing away. The knife wasn't sharp enough so he started to pull on the loose digits to speed the process.

He stepped back looked at the stump he had created. There was contempt in the harsh lines of his face. Pitiful and bloody.

He almost felt ashamed with how personal this was.

"Am I free to go?" the lump croaked on the ground.

Will almost laughed.

"Run."

And run he did, stumbling in the wrong direction, fast on his frail legs and panicked like a fawn.

Will dredged back to his house.

He opened the door with his shirt.

When he stepped back outside he could feel the cold and the bone deep satisfaction of having expressed something he had beaten into hiding for too long.

Towards the setting sun, he could see the frame slowly moving away.

He aimed and shot.

"This...is my design." he murmured.

*

Hannibal woke up to the shrill sound of his phone. It was a strange sensation, to be summoned when you were physically alone. He urgently got up, body already awake, instinctively ready.

"Yes" he answered breathlessly. He realized after picking up that it hadn't even occurred to him that it might be anybody else but him.

"Hi."

"Will." he breathed at the confirmation.

"I'm leaving for a while"

Hannibal's heart jumped. No.

Nothing came next. But Hannibal remained silent. He was waiting for something to hang unto. Proof that this was not permanent. Denial he would have sneered at anybody else.

Arguments were running through his mind. Panic is a strong feeling. Nothing worked up there although he desperately needed it to. Only his body was ready, to run, to beg. But he had no power.

Will took another moment before saying that it wasn't. "I'm...I'm. I have an appointment with a psychiatrist tomorrow."

Hannibal didn't answer. He wasn't sure if it were relief or dread which was washing over him. Little rocks adding up in the pit of his stomach.

"At, at Sheppard Pratt's psychiatric hospital." Will's breath stuttered and Hannibal found himself pressing his ear harder against the receiver. "They have a PTSD program."

Hannibal made a sound of protest that died as soon as Will started yelling.

"I'm not okay Hannibal, don't you dare tell me I'm okay!"..."I, I attempted suicide."

"When?" Hannibal heard his own voice break, suddenly urged to hug himself.

It was incredible, the sudden and utter desperate fear that gripped him.

"This morning...I don't want to talk about it Hannibal. I" and it was barely said in a whisper but the meaning was loud enough. "I killed him."

"Oh Will" Will started shivering at the softness of his voice, "I would have done it for you dear boy."

Will hated that he wouldn't have let him. That he had needed to do this alone. The Supermarket had been his all along, and he wouldn't have accepted it any other way.

"I don't feel good Hannibal. He's still inside my head. I killed him and he won't go away. I want him out." Will sobbed on the other end of the line and Hannibal realized that he had failed to see how impacted he had been. "Temporary insanity" he continued. "It wasn't even me, it's like I was killing him his own way I...I don't know where I am, I can't find myself."

Hannibal closed his eyes and breathed through his nose. There were things he didn't understand. And things he knew he was powerless against. It didn't make them any more pleasant. But they became manageable. He imagined this free mind closed between white walls and doubted the pertinence.

"I'll visit you. Every day." he said calmly. "If you'll have me."

Tears streamed on Will's cheeks. "Please" he said.

Chapter End Notes

Thanks a billion for reading my fic till its end and encouraging me along! It's great to learn how to write with an audience!

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!